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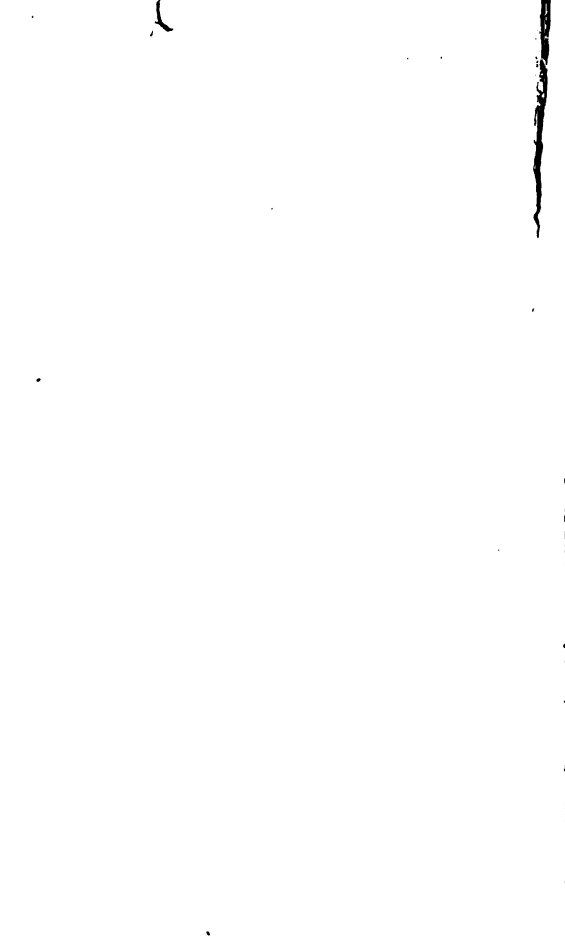
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THE
FARMER'S
DAUGHTER,
OF
ESSEX.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.



James Penn
NEW-YORK:

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CONTAINING,

An Account of her Distress, Wonderful Adventures, manner of being Courted and Seduced by a Nobleman in London, who after living with her some Years, parted in the most dishonourable manner. With an Account of her meeting him a second time and many particular Occurrences that happened during the remainder of their lives



FARMER'S DAUGHTER.



MR. S. D—, my father, was descended from an ancient and respectable family, in the county of Essex ; distinguished for many centuries, both in the military and literary world.

Their zeal in parliament, for the liberty of the subject, had been conspicuously meritorious, because disinterested ; for though they might have enriched themselves and aggrandized their family (having what was sufficient to support a genteel independency) when offered, refused to accept them.— They sought no other emolument from their public services, than the approbation of their constituents, and to merit the applause of the virtuous. The family was not less eminent for their military capacity and abilities, being equally brave and humane : by their valour they acquired the esteem of their superiors, and for their tender care of, and mild behaviour to those under their command, they were beloved by their inferiors. Of this family it might be truly said, that all the male issue was wise and valiant,

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took a house at the court end of the town, which he elegantly furnished, set up his equipage, and lived in a gay and splendid manner: He soon fell into the fashionable vices of the town, and was generally engaged in some act of intemperance or debauchery. In the summer season, he usually made a visit to the manor-house, and defiled a place, which had ever been sacred to chastity and temperance, with his drunken and debauched companions, whom he brought with him from town. In one of these scenes of riot, he was drawn in to promise marriage to an infamous prostitute, which the next day, stupified with intemperance, he performed. This deed filled up the measure of his follies, and brought him to an immature death. His marriage (which may be easily supposed) did not lessen, but increase, his licentiousness; he was led into every excess by his wife, and he became abandoned to all manner of wickedness, no sin escaped him. She, fortunately for my father, died a few months after the nuptials. My uncle continued his vicious course, was, within the year after her death, seized with a violent fever, which terminated an infamous and inglorious life, just as he was going to mortgage the remainder of the family estate.

My father, who succeeded to the estate,

had the advantage of a good education, under his uncle the clergyman, who took pleasure in cultivating and improving the natural parts of his nephew. After having gone through the necessary forms of education, he was sent to one of the universities, to complete his studies, where, by his sober and studious behaviour, he acquired the esteem of his superiors, and was assured of their friendship. After seven year's residence, he was obliged to quit the university, his brother dying, and to commence farmer, the portion left him through his brother's profligacy, being small, though admitting of improvement.

It was not long, after he had been settled in his farm, before he was married to a clergyman's daughter in the neighbourhood, the agreeable Miss B. not more amiable for the beauty of her person, than the accomplishments of her mind. His acquaintance with her was, from visiting the family; the friendship began in youth, lowe perfected.— There was no difficulty in obtaining the consent of her parents, who had beheld with pleasure the intimacy between them, and rejoiced at the happy union. Within two years after the marriage, my mother's parents died.

The consequence of matrimony was a numerous offspring, who were brought up in a

genteel and useful manner. The liberal education of our father, and a small, but well chosen library, were advantages that few, in our station of life, are blessed with. Our parents were more solicitous to improve and refine the understanding, than to adorn and set off the person; knowing that the latter only rendered us pleasing and agreeable to others, but the former would prove a real and permanent benefit to ourselves. We were taught how to manage a family before we became mistress of one, and to be able to give to, not receive instructions from servants. We read every evening in such books as made us wiser and better, and were not permitted any that had a tendency to corrupt and debauch our morals, however amusing and entertaining.

How unlike this conduct to the prevailing method of educating youth, by which the sex, weak in nature, not capacity, is made weaker by the parents neglect of the culture of the mind, to give a gracefulness to the person? This grand error is principally owing to the vanity of the age, in which gaiety in dress passes for merit, and a genteel carriage is taken for good sense. The accomplishments laboured after are those of the agreeable, not the useful, which serve to adorn and ornament the person, not refine and polish the manners. Accomplish-

ments these, which will diminish and exhaust, not increase, nor preserve a fortune. The so much admired elegance of taste and dress after marriage, is found to be empty and extravagant; and a state designed, by Providence and the parties proposed, to be a blessing, proves a curse, and terminates, as many families have unhappily experienced, in discontent, poverty, and aversion.

How often are the fortune and private happiness of a family sacrificed to support the pride of one who hath nothing but a pretty face to recommend her, whilst the possessor of real merit and substantial worth is neglected, often despised? To aggrandize the former, the rest of the children must be reduced to the necessity of acquiring by labour and service, what they had a right to expect by inheritance.

It was different in our family; we lived, we loved, as brethren should, but as few brethren do. The only preference given, by our parents, was to those who behaved the best. I, who was by much the handsomest of the daughters, had not any peculiar respect shewn me; neither did I set any value upon my beauty, or treat my sisters with the least disdain for that superiority of nature, and my dress was the same with theirs, plain and neat.

When any person (which frequently hap-

pened) commended my beauty, my father's usual reply was, "She is a good girl, and that is her merit: her goodness may last forever, but every day diminishes something of the value of beauty; the comeliness of the most amiable and engaging form, like the rose, soon goes off, and decays. A few years, said he, changes the aspect and features, so that, like to an ancient city in ruins, little will remain to shew what was the glory and pride of its inhabitants. Its existence, like to certain animals, is but for a day; it is an object fit only to entertain the sight, and the pleasure it affords, is like to those imaginary and momentary joys exhibited in dreams, which, when awake, end either in disappointment or false satisfaction. The virtues of the soul only are amiable and lasting; from which alone she is to expect any real and solid good." Such sayings were common with my father, and were of singular use, since they taught us to found our merit, not upon any advantages of nature and person, but the virtuous endowments of the mind.

We lived in the greatest harmony and love, every one happy, till the fatal day, when I with my brothers and sisters, as usual, went to a neighbouring wake. Here we met with Mr. S—, who, in passing through the village, alighted from his horse, and

joined with us in the rural pastime of singing and dancing. He fixed his eyes upon me, and courted my esteem, by endeavouring to please, and presenting me with several little trinkets. His civility was received with proper acknowledgment, and I was far from suspecting any base design against me. He talked much, and privately, with my eldest brother, to learn from him, as I afterwards understood, who I was, what my station, family, name, and place of abode.

Mr. S— was a gentleman possessed of many natural advantages, improved by education and travel; his judgment was sound, penetration acute, address polite, person amiable, and wit engaging: so that it was impossible to be in his company, and not for one sex to esteem, and the other admire him. Under these excellencies, however, was a base heart, under this heavenly form great villanies were concealed. He commended virtue, but did not practise it. Represent to yourself what the most pious and godly are, such he appeared to be; inquire what the most profligate and abandoned are, such he really was. He was thoroughly versed in intrigues, and too well knew what would please, allure, and captivate our sex. He searched in their foibles, then attacked, and seldom failed of accomplishing his designs on their virtue.

Some few days after the wake was over, my father received the following letter :

SIR,

In passing through the village of M. at their time of the wake, I was agreeably surprised at the sight of your eldest daughter, whose person and conversation charmed and captivated me. She is, Sir, a fortune in herself, she wants no other portion than nature hath bestowed and you have improved. If you should deem me respectable enough to be allied to so worthy a family by permitting my addresses to the young lady, you will promote the happiness of him who hopes to subscribe himself

Your affectionate son,

T. S.

This letter was received by my father, and read to me with surprise and astonishment. It was then I felt something like love, some soft emotions rising in my breast. My father looked at me, expecting an answer, he being an entire stranger to the affair of the wake. I, at that instant recollecting some tender expressions dropped, and his polite behaviour, replied by a blush, which seemed to ask the permission of a visit. My father, observing my confusion (to which though I laboured, I was unable to conceal) instead of a severe rebuke, which I apprehended, said,

"I hope, child, you have not been guilty of an indiscretion in countenancing a stranger, who may, on inquiry, prove unworthy of your affections. If he hath virtue enough, whatever his wealth and power, which are no considerations with me, my consent, if you are desirous of having it, will follow, since, your happiness will be an addition to my own." I answered, taking courage from so mild and generous an address, "Your pleasure, Sir, is mine, and I submit myself entirely to your will, since I am fully persuaded, that as you are always ready to indulge me in all things lawful, so you will not oppose my desire in any thing, but what you imagine may prove hurtful and injurious to me."

My father, after consulting my mother, and understanding who the gentleman was, returned the following answer :

"SIR,

"I am obliged to you for the kind sentiments expressed in your letter of the 14th instant. The alliance proposed is not, I think, consistent with your honour and interest. How would her obscurity and your eminence, her poverty and your wealth, her simplicity and your grandeur, agree? She hath no other portion than her virtue, of small account in an age of licentiousness.—

B

You will find it difficult to withstand the raillery of your acquaintance and friends, for marrying a plain country girl ; when, by reason of your birth and station in life, you might have easily acquired a lady of beauty, understanding, and fortune. Permit me to request you to think no more of her, and to place your affections where they will be more agreeable to your friends, and, in the end, most desirable to yourself.

“ Your humble servant,

May 17.

“ S. D.”

How many would have readily given admittance to the writer of the letter, and thought an alliance to a person of Mr. S—’s fortune and distinction an honour ! parents are presumed to act for the good of their children, yet it oftentimes happens, that they dispose of them in marriage, to ennoble and aggrandize their family, to persons for whom they have no affection, hardly a decent respect, if not an entire dislike and aversion. What real good to the parent to have the family enriched and ennobled, if these things are purchased at the expence of the children’s ease and happiness ? What is grandeur if succeeded by domestic strife and variance ? How much happier those, who, if poor, are content ; if the world frown upon them abroad, unaffected cheerfulness

reigns at home; who forget the cares and troubles of life in innocent mirth and festivity.

Though my father's estate was small, his virtues were great; he esteemed no one the better than another for his wealth, or his power, too often the portion of fools and knaves, but for the goodness of his actions. The honest man clothed in rags, was more his admiration, than vice decked in embroidery, which he held in the utmost detestation. Respect and deference, in his opinion, belonged, of right, only to the man of strict probity and integrity, and the more distinguished by fortune and birth, the greater was the obligation to excel others in virtue and goodness.

Some few days having passed, Mr. S— sent his servant with the following letter to my father:

“SIR,

“I received the favour of yours. The goods of fortune have been ever held, in my judgment, of the lowest estimation. The excellencies of the mind, rare to be met with in any condition of life, made me the lover. If so happy to engage the young lady's affections, and to procure the parent's consent, my behaviour will convince you how little I shall regard the censure of my relations, and

with what indifference I shall treat the rail-
lery of my acquaintance. I wait your an-
swer.

“ Your most obedient,
May 22.

“ T. S.”

After some private discourse had with my mother, my father went out, invited, and conducted him in. The usual compliments being over, the conversation turned upon me. My father began, “ Though, Sir, by the style of your letter, and appearance, you are the gentleman, you will allow it to be both prudent and discreet in the parent, before he gives his consent, in a matter of such interesting importance to the future welfare and happiness of his child, since you have but lately come into these parts, to know who you are, what your family and connexions, and what is of more consequence than either, where is your particular residence in town, that I may make the necessary inquiry into your character. My satisfaction in this particular will compensate for any deficiency in the others, and without it, however wealthy and powerful, your application will be fruitless, and you must desist from any farther visits.”

Mr. S— modestly replied, “ Your requests, Sir, are prudent and just, and it will be a pleasure to me to give you the satisfac-

tion wanted, which, I flatter myself, after the most strict enquiry, you will receive.—Our family have been knights of the shire for Somersetshire for many years; I am the only son and heir to their vast estate; we are connected, by marriage, to the best families in the kingdom, and my residence is in Grosvenor-Square.”

My father took down the answer in writing, saying, he had some knowledge of the family he had mentioned, by reading, but imposters being frequent, he must excuse him if he doubted. If he should prove to be the person he declared himself, he might have free access to his house upon the honourable terms he had mentioned, of which he should have the earliest notice. Mr. S—entirely approved of these proceedings, desiring my father that he would be expeditious in his inquiry; which he promised.

My father was highly pleased and entertained with the sensible remarks of Mr. S—who dined with us, and then took his leave of the family, with a promise of a return, after the enquiry. When he was gone, the whole family spoke greatly in favour of Mr. —, not one was silent in his praise; and they joined with me, in pressing my father to set out for London the next day, which he, ever ready to oblige his family, did.

If my father was pleased before, at the understanding of Mr. S—, he was now charmed at the amiableness of his character. So far from being a bad man, that he was free, even from the suspicion of guilt. From his exemplary life he was high in esteem with the rich; beloved by the poor, whom he often and liberally relieved; and the tradesmen in the neighbourhood bestowed on him the greatest encomiums, for his punctuality and regularity in his payments. But alas! all this was hypocrisy, (too much the religion of the times,) a mere shew of goodness: he was, what is called, a private sinner. In places the most distant from his dwelling, not visited by any of his acquaintance, and of secrecy certain, he gave a loose to his desires, and no one so debauched and intemperate, as my father, too late for me, discovered.

Rejoicing at the agreeable intelligence, my father hastened into the country. No sooner did he arrive, but he wrote the following letter to Mr. S—.

“Sir,

“I am just returned from town, where I have received the satisfaction required.— If you continue in the same mind, as from your character I am convinced of your intention being honourable, you are permitted

to renew, and continue your visits, and if you engage the affections of the daughter, you may rest assured of the father's consent.

Your humble servant,

June 1.

S. D."

Upon the receipt of this letter, Mr. S— came early next morning, and continued his visits daily, and was considered as one of the family. We were frequently alone, when he would entertain me with discourses of the sincerity of his passion, and he seemed to speak the language of his heart. His behaviour was modest, never uttering an indecent expression, nor offering any rudeness, notwithstanding our freedom and familiarity. He exclaimed with great warmth and indignation against those villians, who, taking an advantage of the weakness of our sex, by promises of never-ceasing love, steal their affections, deceive them, and, having deprived them of their virtue, leave them to infamy and disease. Such conversation was extremely agreeable, and confirmed me in my opinion of Mr. S—'s virtue, and his love for me.

After a few week's visiting in this manner, the sister of Mr. S— came into the country to see him; in appearance a modest, sensible and discreet young lady, very agreeable and entertaining in her conversa-

tion. There needed no apology for introducing her to the family, so amiable a person could not fail of being acceptable. Her temper was so free and easy, that she soon gained my confidence, and I communicated to her, without the least reserve, the secrets of my soul, and the excessive passion I had for her brother; little imagining that I cherished a viper in my bosom, and under the mask of friendship my ruin was to be accomplished.

About a fortnight after her coming, the day of marriage was fixed, and great preparations were making for the solemnization. Mr. S—, in the mean time, was setting out on a journey into Somersetshire, to pay a visit to his friends and relations, and to communicate his intended nuptials. The day before he set out, he rode over to my father's, and entreated him to permit me to be with his sister till his return, which would be with the utmost expedition. The request being reasonable, was granted.

The next morning Mr. S—, seemingly with great reluctance, the most sincere expressions of his affection, and the most tender embraces (which lovers, who are used to deceive, abound with) took his leave and proceeded on his journey.

The departure of Mr. S—, gave me no small concern, for though his love was base

and designing, mine was chaste and honest. His sister was not wanting in words of consolation, saying, "How unfortunate it was, that so loving a pair should suffer the uneasiness of a moment's separation, and—." Here she was stopped by the sudden and unexpected return of Mr. S—, in a post chaise, who had been thrown from his horse, was much bruised and wounded. The sight of his blood terribly frightened me, and, like one frantic, I ran, not knowing what I did, into his arms, and clasping him round, cried in the most affectionate manner, "How is my dear? Say, how happened this misfortune? What is your hurt? Where is your pain?" He replied, "Enfolded in these arms, I feel, my love, no pain; this precious balm (saluting me) will soon recover me, and heal my wounds."

He was immediately put into bed, and an express was dispatched to my father, to acquaint him of this melancholy accident; which when related, affected the whole family with the deepest concern. In the interim, the surgeon, who had been sent for (a servant of Mr. S—'s, a pander to his infamous lust, dressed like a gentleman) came; and after having examined him, pronounced him (a most joyful hearing) out of danger, but ordered him to be kept still, for fear of a fever.

When my father came, after some words of condolence had passed, I requested that I might stay to assist Mr S—'s sister, in the recovery of her brother's health, and of a person so dear and so valuable to me, and to our family. The request was readily granted by my father, who added, "Well, Sir, if love and esteem can do any thing towards a cure, your recovery will be soon effected by two such nurses." Mr. S— smiled, and my father left him, sending every day to know how he did, and oftentimes coming himself.

His sister and I generally sat up every other night. Notwithstanding his indisposition, the hours seemed to pass pleasantly away, love being the principal subject of our conversation, and frequent wishes for the day, when our happiness would be completed. One night, when he had entered deeply into these matters, and reason was absorbed in love, he, who had been long long watching the favourable opportunity of gratifying the base design upon my honour, said, "My dear, why should we protract the bliss, which we so ardently wish to enjoy;" I stood amazed and confounded at his saying. He drew me towards him, and declared, with the most solemn vows, his sincerity. I endeavoured to release myself, and called out for help, but in vain, for he clasped me in his arms and prevented me. He

solicited, I denied; he promised, I trembled; he vowed, I believed.

Ere the guilty scene was closed, my conscience smote me: and when the guilty scene was closed, something from within told me that I had done wrong. O! what trouble and sorrow did I feel at heart! The mind, before calm and serene, was now restless and disturbed. My innocence, never to be restored, was no more, and happiness, exchanged for misery. I would have given the world to be myself again, and to have recovered my lost virtue. I stood motionless, with shame and grief, when his sister coming in, and learning the cause of my confusion, instead of pitying and commiserating, smiled at my misfortune, and complimented me on the pleasing surrender, as she termed it. "For, my dear, it is only anticipating the ceremony, and you need not be under the least apprehension, after so many solemn assurances given, of the sincerity of Mr. S—'s passion." With that saying he came forward, and with a seeming tremour on his spirits, censured and reproached himself for the rashness of the action, wholly ascribing it to the violence of his passion; which, notwithstanding what had happened, he assured me, was not lessened, but heightened; and to convince me of it, he would marry

me, by a special licence, previous to the public solemnization.

This promise afforded some relief to my troubled mind, as it would conceal my shame, though it could not excuse the crime I had committed. I went to bed supperless, but no rest could I take; conscious guilt kept me awake, and reflection upon my past folly, and the fear of its discovery, made me almost mad. The behaviour of his pious and modest sister astonished me, who, instead of condemning, approved the deed; instead of being enraged at, was delighted with it. This consideration led me to a suspicion, that he would, notwithstanding his fair and specious promises, deceive and abandon me to all the horrors of shame and guilt. With these and the like melancholy reflections, the solitary night passed away in tears of grief.

His sister came the next morning to my chamber, and invited me down to breakfast in her brother's apartment, which I entered with a dejected and sad countenance, and sat down in silent sorrow. "My love, said Mr. S—, be not sorrowful and cast down, I expect the license and the clergyman about noon! when I hope you will be satisfied, that though my passion was violent, the design was not base. May I be the most wretched of beings, whilst living, and when

dead, the most accursed hereafter, if I even purpose to deceive thee. Look not then with such coolness on me." I, unpractised in love's false arts, was easy of belief, but my heart was too full of sorrow to make any reply.

I had neither inclination, nor appetite to eat, I was so trouble in mind. Breakfast being over, I took a walk in the garden, where every thing, I fancied, reminded me of my lost innocence. The flowers seemed to have no fragrancy, and the blooming rose faded at my touch. As I was entering into an arbour to meditate on my wretched condition, a servant came to acquaint me, that Mr. S— requested my presence in the parlour, adding, "The clergyman is come."

I followed, with hasty steps, and in a few minutes, to all appearance, we were married.

This ceremony removed every suspicion, and released me from my fears. We now agreed to live together, like married people, with this restriction, that we would avoid familiarity before any of the family, lest we might be suspected.

About ten days passed away in this manner, when, one evening, after supper, he told me, that if agreeable to me, he would fix a day, in the following week, for our public marriage; which being approved of, he sent

immediate notice thereof to my father, whom he desired to accompany him the next day, to take out the license, as I was under age. My father accordingly came, expressed great joy at the approaching nuptials, and went home fully satisfied of my happiness, from the courteous and polite behaviour of Mr S— towards him, and the tenderness and affection he shewed to me. The wedding was to be kept at my father's, and great preparations were made, the neighbouring gentry being invited.

Two days before the wedding day, Mr. S— after breakfast, proposed an airing, the first after his feigned indisposition, having the night before sent off all his valuables and luggage in a waggon. This proposal was cheerfully consented to by me, thinking it would contribute to the recovery of his health. We went into the coach, the window blinds having been drawn up for fear of his taking cold.

When we were seated, two more horses were added to the carriage, and the coachman received orders not to stop at any place. After travelling three or four hours, I said, "When, my dear, shall we stop?—Where are we going, for we seem to be drove at a great rate?"—"We are not far from home, said Mr. S—. We are taking a circuit, and the hills make it seem long

and tedious; a little patience, my love, and we shall be at our journey's end." In less than two hours, the coach shook and jolted so much, that I was afraid of being overturned, and hearing strange voices on each side of the coach, I was terrified with the apprehension of robbers, Mr. S—, to dissipate my fears, let down the blind, when, to my astonishment, I found myself at an inn, and upon alighting, inquired the name of the place, I was answered, with a smile at my ignorance, it is called, madam, London.

We were shewn a room, into which I had scarcely entered, when I fainted away.— Upon my recovery, Mr. S— assured me, the design of coming to town was, that I might please myself with patterns of silk for suits of clothes, and to buy some laces and jewels, suitable to my station in life, the appearance I was to make on my wedding day, and the visits to be returned after it. This dissipated my fears, and after a little refreshment, he handed me into a superb chariot in waiting, which, after having purchased a great variety of things mentioned, carrying us to a large and elegant house in Broad-street, prepared for my reception.

The next day I arose early, expecting the coach and six to carry us into the country. But how confounded was I when Mr. S—'s

sister acquainted me, that her brother had put off his journey, and had written to my father concerning our marriage in the country; adding, that this being his resolution, she should take her leave, as we were now happily and comfortably settled, and set out to-morrow on her return to Somersetshire. I could make no answer for some time; at last, bursting into a flood of tears, I said,—“O madam, do not leave me a stranger in a strange place; without your company I shall be comfortless, having no one to whom I can communicate my thoughts or converse with but yourself; stay, at least, till I have contracted some acquaintance, till I can send for a sister to town, to be my companion.” I pity your condition, replied Miss S—, but his orders for my leaving town are absolute, and I must comply, however disagreeable, my whole subsistence depending on him, which you will hereafter know.” Then embracing me with great warmth, she said,—“If I have ever done any thing to displease or offend you, forgive me.” I hastily answered, not dreaming that she had been the instrument employed to effect my ruin, “You want no forgiveness, for it is not in so good a nature to do any one the least injury.” This said, we embraced again, and she departed, to prepare, as I thought, for her journey.

She was a young woman of a reputable family, as I found, in the city, who had been seduced from her relations by Mr. S—, on whom he had made a handsome settlement, on this vile and infamous condition, that she would, upon occasion, represent his sister, and be assisting to him in his intrigues, to debauch the innocent and unwary. He became acquainted with her at a city ball.— At these entertainments the youth of both sexes indiscriminately meet, and little inquiry is made into the character of the persons admitted; the appearance, if decent, being sufficient to constitute the gentleman, and to procure his admission. At these entertainments freedoms, though innocent, are permitted, which do not comport with that reserved behavior the young ladies are obliged to observe at home, and an acquaintance is often contracted, which reflects an injury on their character, if nothing worse happens to their person.

How unsuitable to her station and circumstances in life, is the city miss's education. Instead of being taught good housewifery, how to bring up and manage a family, she is bred up in the air and taste of quality; she is taught to sing—to play—to dance—to talk French—to shine at a play, or an opera, even to vie with ladies of the first distinc-

tion, in finery. What must be the consequence of this vanity? If her fortune and discretion are not equal to her pride, she will sacrifice her virtue to support the latter and become the mistress of some vicious lord, or else she must bemoan her virginity all the days of her life; since a superior will not match with her, and one of equal condition avoids her, knowing that such connexion must terminate in beggary and ruin. Thus, through the extravagance of females in dress, and the dearness of the necessaries of life, a considerable check is given to matrimony, and keeping becomes unavoidable.

Upon Mr. S—'s return home to dinner, I mentioned the discourse of his sister; he, smiling, answered, "It is very true, and since we were married, it is of little consequence where we live, either in town or country;" adding, "I have written to your father, earnestly requesting his leave for some of the family to come to town." I was well pleased at this declaration, hoping the best, yet suspecting the worst. What increased my suspicion was, after a month's residence in town, I heard nothing from the country, he continually amused me with daily expectation of their arrival, or diverting an enquiry by the public entertainments. What further increased my suspicion was,

not being visited by any family though I frequently went to the play, and conversed there with several persons, both gentlemen and ladies; and, what was more particularly noticed by me, he never went himself, nor permitted me to go to church, from which, except in the time of his indisposition, he never in the country absented.

I was confirmed in my suspicions, that things were not right, by the following accident. I took up a resolution of visiting, since I could not be visited by my neighbours. I accordingly sent a card to lady L—, with my compliments, if not engaged I would wait upon her that afternoon. The servant returned with this verbal message, that lady L— wondered at my assurance, for she kept no such company. This message greatly surprised me, knowing Mr. S— to be her superior both in birth and fortune. When he came in I shewed him the card, and told him the answer returned; at which he appeared to be highly displeased and incensed; from a resentment, I judged, of the treatment shewn to me, instead of an apprehension of a detection of his villainy.

A few days after this affair going into his cabinet, I found the license, which alarmed me, imagining that it had been lodged in the parish church to which we belonged,

when we were married. I carefully folded it up, and put it into my pocket, and ordered a chair to be got ready, I bid the servant to carry me to a linen draper's in the neighbourhood. After having purchased sundry things, I entered into some conversation with him, and mentioned the ungenteel behaviour of lady L—. Having desired me to walk backward, the draper replied, "Madam, that lady's behaviour was upon the presumption of your not being married, and in the same opinion is the whole neighbourhood, Mr. S—'s character being very well known in this part of the town." "What, Sir, said I, somewhat in anger, do you take me to be his mistress! Pray read this, and be convinced (giving the licence into his hands) that I am the lawful wife of Mr. S—." He took it, and reading, shook his head, saying, "Madam, this is an old licence, obtained by fraud; the real names and dates are erased, and yours, as you may observe, forged; you will find yourself, what many of your sex have experienced, through his wickedness, if you look upon him as your husband." At this declaration I swooned away, and was, with difficulty, got into the chair.

When I got home, I waited, with the utmost impatience, Mr. S—'s return to dinner. Dinner being over, and the servants

dismissed, I intreated the favour of his resolving me a single question, which was, "whether I was his wife or his mistress?" He answered, with some indignation, "can you doubt of being the former, when you know in what particular manner our marriage was solemnized?" to which I replied, "I am informed, by Mr. T—, the draper, that the licence which I found in your cabinet, and shewed him, and by which we were married, was a forgery, and the clergyman, who married us, was certainly no better than an impostor." This unexpected reply confused him, when, after a little hesitation, and taking a turn round the room, he answered, "Pray, madam. do I treat you like a mistress? Are you not in full possession of every thing that I have? Do you want for any thing that can contribute to your pleasure and your ease? Have you not the sole command and disposal of the house? It would become you better, madam, to be grateful for what you have; and I would advise you, as you value my happiness and your own, not to be too prying and inquisitive." He said no more, waited for no reply, and went out of the room in a most violent passion.— This coolness confirmed the sentiments of the draper, and my wretched condition stared me in the face.

He spared no expence, indeed, to make

my life pleasant and agreeable. A house, genteelly furnished; library, consisting of modern books in taste; plays and operas, to amuse and entertain; a coach and chariot, with servants to attend me at all hours; the most sumptuous dresses, and richest jewels, to adorn my person; the choicest wines, and most luxurious delicacies, to regale the appetite; in short, I seemed to want for nothing, when, in reality, I wanted for every thing—my innocence, my innocence was lost; and could the perjured wretch have restored it me again, or made the right compensation for the violation of it, by a real marriage, I should have been happy. Heaven would have pardoned the first folly, I should have been preserved from greater wretchedness, and, worst of all, from an increase of guilt. In the absence of Mr. S—the library was my principal delight: in some of the books I read of the unfortunate and deluded part of our sex, which drew tears of pity and commiseration from me, not imagining at that time, that I should be plunged into the same, even greater distresses, though not the same guilt.

I was narrowly watched, by order of Mr. S—, lest I should abscond. I should certainly have attempted an escape, but I knew not where, or to whom to go; and I dreaded a return to my father. He behaved with his

usual civility for about two years after this affair, endeavouring to keep me in ignorance, and protesting his innocence. After that time he began to decline, was less at home, and seemed not so fond of my company. He frequently came home disordered in liquor, which he knew was my detestation, when he insulted me with the most approbrious language, as if it was not sufficient to have despoiled me of my innocence.—He would excuse himself indeed the next day, when sober, but his intoxication was so often repeated, that he was lost to all sense of decency, and began to treat me with the greatest indifference. Nevertheless, I was studious to please and humour his perverse temper, being careful not to commit a fault, or afford the least pretence for his brutality.

Would the friends of the bottle reflect on the mischievous consequences of excessive drinking, they would be sick of it, at least be temperate in the use of it. The drunkard is not content with murdering himself, but he scatters mischief all around him. His tongue is full of slander and defamation—his eyes are inflamed and burnt with lust—his ears are open to every base and scandalous report—his hands are ready to commit any violence, and his feet swift to execute it.—For wine hardens him against the fear of

danger, stifles remorse, renders him insensible of shame, prompts him to mean gratifications, and urges him on to the most cruel and ungenerous actions. Mr. S—, to excuse his drinking (the folly of which, when cool, I took the freedom of remonstrating to him) pleaded that there was truth in wine. A just observation. For it frequently occasions the wine-bibbers to speak what, in prudence they should have carefully concealed, and often exposes their weakness and incapacity, which would have been for their interest to have continued a secret. However successful in dissembling, when sober, it is not an easy matter to play the hypocrite when drunk. The more the person is disguised in liquor, the more open his heart generally is ; it makes wise men appear like fools, and somewhat unluckily indeed, shews fools, not known to be such before, what they really are ; it takes every one off his guard, leaving no one the command of himself, his words, or his actions. This was the case of Mr. S—, who, in his fits of intemperance, would drop the words, “deserting, keeping, complying, discharging, marrying,” &c. Though I understood not the meaning of those words, I suspected they proceeded from some base scheme in agitation. I soon found my suspicions to be true.

One evening he brought home a gentleman, whom he called Sir John. It was late, and I had waited in expectation of his coming to tea. He seemed to have been drinking very freely, for he could scarce support himself. After they were seated, I asked him if he chose tea or coffee: he, with an unusual air, broke the china with his cane, ordered the servant to fetch a bottle of claret, and in an imperious tone bid me begone immediately. I paid my respects, and with pleasure retired; but had the curiosity, knowing that I was secure from a discovery, to listen to the conversation. Well, said my 'squire, am not I a man of spirit?—think you, Sir John? who dares to treat a mistress thus?

Sir John replied, Why, truly, no man: nor would you have dared, had she been your mistress.

Will you bet an hundred guineas?

No betting, answered Sir John; her countenance is too modest, and her behaviour too prudent, for a kept lady; and your manner of treating her too rude and insolent to be her keeper; she is certainly your wife.—Were she your mistress, you would have had the coffee-pot at your head and the servants been ordered to kick us both out of the house; and to-morrow you must have pur-

chased your peace with her by a present of plate, a diamond ring, or a piece of silk. I have seen enough, Harry, of this brutal conduct in the married state, that I cannot be mistaken; when the best treatment hath been merited, but have never known or heard of it in the other, notwithstanding their pride and insolence have been intolerable, and would have excused the worst behaviour. I tell you, Sir John, you are mistaken: another time I will convince you. Would every gentleman observe my rule, and exert his superiority of nature, the ladies would not be so presuming and insolent; they would know their station better, and appear more in real character, by being obedient and patient. Our superiority of nature, Harry, affords little matter of triumph, a trifling consideration, when an inferiority in virtue and modesty is against us. A mere compliment this to the sex, Sir John. A gentleman of your understanding must know that, in respect to virtue and vice, the sexes are upon an equality. Few persons are more acquainted with life than myself; and I do assure you, Harry, that I never met with a bad woman, whom we, to the reproach of our sex, and shame of our boasted superiority, did not, by our example, brutal behaviour, or indifference, make bad. Let us finish the disagreeable subject, Sir John; for I am not

to be convinced. Here the conversation ended, and I withdrew, having heard enough of Mr. S—'s dishonesty.

In this manner we lived a considerable time, when, coming home one evening, very early and unexpectedly, to supper, being in great good humour, talking of this and that, he said, "Will you oblige me, my dear, with your company to-morrow at the opera." I was pleased with the opportunity of going abroad, having been at no place of entertainment for some time, and much confined. We spent the evening agreeably, sat up late, and were uncommonly cheerful. Sad mirth! the event will shew it. We are often least suspicious when there is the most danger, and when it is most necessary, we are the least upon our guard. Little did I expect, under these professions of regard and complaisance, my destruction was concluded upon, and that in giving him the pleasure of my company, an eternal separation was designed.

The following evening I went, richly dressed, to the opera, and afterwards to a friend's house, where we finished the evening; and being late, continued all night.—In the morning he rose early, and after breakfast, pretended some urgent business, he left me with a promise of seeing me at

dinner. I wondered that the chariot returned not, for I usually took an airing every morning. Dinner brought up, I was under no little concern that he came not. Dinner and supper being over, no Mr. S—, I became very uneasy. Whilst I was considering with myself, what should be the cause of his absence, a porter brought me the following billet :

“ My dearest,

“ Be not troubled at my absence, occasioned by debates in parliament, of the most interesting concern to the public. The time is not less tedious to me than you, till my return. I am obliged to keep the chariot, not knowing when the house will break up. Your orders will be cheerfully obeyed where you are, as if at home, among your own servants.”

I had no suspicion of the honesty of this billet, knowing the house did not sometimes break up until two, or three in the morning. But how great was my surprise, when, instead of seeing him in the morning, which I expected, I received this short, but melancholy note, by the same porter.

“ Madam,

“ I am obliged to leave the town immedi-

ately, my affairs being in some confusion. You must not expect to see me again, nor can you return to your former habitation, the house and furniture being in the possession of my creditors. You need not doubt of civil treatment where you are, if you comply with their request, and I think you need not be delicate and nice in the affair, having been kept by,

Yours, &c.

T. S."

Upon reading the note, I broke out into the following exclamation. O cursed villain! was it not base enough to deceive me, but you must add to thy treachery, cruelty, by deserting me in so shameful a manner, and leaving me in so vile and infamous a place with the most abandoned and profligate of our sex. Unable to calm that hurry of spirits, which his cruel desertion, and the reflection upon my present distressed situation occasioned, I fainted; and was with great difficulty recovered. Upon my recovery I found myself alone, with one of the old lady's supposed daughters, the rest of the family having withdrawn, company coming in.—Pray miss, said I, what sort of a house is this? What is the business carried on in it? What is the profession of the lady, your mother? She answered me with a deep sigh,

Alas! madam, I have no mother. I was at the age of fifteen seduced by a pretended lover, and my beauty, which repeated acts of intemperance and debauchery have now almost effaced, the joy and pride of my parents, proved my ruin and occasioned their immature death. They entertained expectations superior to my merit, and on that account, my dress and appearance were above my condition and circumstances in life. I frequented every place of public resort, by which I acquired a gay turn of mind, and an extravagant passion for pleasure, which terminated in the loss of my honour in this infamous house, the mart of lewdness and debauchery, where innocence and beauty are doomed to infamy and disease. I will not, continued she, offend your chaste ears to mention the various scenes of iniquity and lust exhibited in this place. I hope you will have virtue enough to refuse, and courage enough not to be intimidated by threats, to comply with the terms that will be proposed to you. May heaven preserve you from my wretchedness and guilt! This said, she left the room.—Unhappy young woman, said I, if the deluded suffer so much distress, what must their seducers feel! But, alas! they may revel and riot in debauchery and drunkenness, and still support their character, whilst poor woman, for one false step,

is condemned by her own sex, forsaken by her friends, and abandoned to profligacy.

I refused for some time, to take any nourishment, abandoned myself to grief and sorrow. I was roused from this situation by the mistress of the house, who told me, "that I must cease my lamentations, and dry up my tears, and think of doing something to provide for myself. for she could not afford to maintain, and keep me, for nothing." Had I been at a loss to know the meaning of these words, her husband, who came up, explained them to me, saying, with an impudent face and vile tongue,— "Madam, you must either commence prostitute, and join company with your sisters below stairs, or immediately turn out." I did not hesitate in determining what to do, though shocked at the proposal. I still had so much virtue left, to give the preference to the latter, judging that my jewels, &c. which were valuable, would, by the sale of them, enable me to put myself in the haberdashery, or millenary way. Upon hearing my resolution, a coach was sent for; I got into it, and ordered the man to drive to Broad-street. When I came there, I found the servants all gone, and the furniture of the house selling by auction. Not less shocked at the sight, than by the sudden reverse of fortune, I fainted. By the assist-

ance of the persons present, and some harts-horn, my spirits were recovered.

I then ordered the coachman to drive to a jeweller's in the Strand, who had some knowledge of my person, and of whom the trinkets in my possession were bought. I was set down at the house, and finding him at home, mentioned my distress, and my design, by the help of the jewels, to put myself in some way of business. He readily recollected me, and invited me into his back parlour; when looking upon the jewels, he shook his head. This surprised me, thinking it arose from a concern for my unhappy condition; but how great was my astonishment, when he said, "Madam, I sold you diamonds, but these are no better than Frenchpaste; the gold repeating watch, &c. you had of me was worth about one hundred guineas; this being pinchbeck, is in value about seven; for your ear-rings, necklace, stomacher, &c. I received about four hundred pounds; for these I cannot allow you more than thirty."

After recovering from the confusion this declaration occasioned, I took my leave for the present, and bid the coachman drive to Mr. —'s before whom I laid open the whole affair, and my suspicion of the robbery. He heard me with attention, and then told me he would grant me a warrant, but it would be

very difficult to prove a robbery, or even an exchange, because I had never been out of the room; adding further, that he suspected me, notwithstanding the modest, but artful simplicity of my looks, that I was a cheat, for he was sure of my being a——, because the place mentioned was the most infamous—— house in town. This enraged me, and with some warmth I replied, “That his worship ought to afford protection to the innocent and the distressed. Farther, I told him, that I was Mr. S—’s wife, who was gone into the country upon business.

Now, said he, you have convinced me that you really are what I suspected you to be. Mr. S— is married, to the great joy of that ancient and worthy family, and left that woman, whom you acknowledge yourself to be. whose prodigality, pride, and extravagance, would have terminated in the ruin of his estate, and the dishonour of his family. It is on his account I dismiss you, and not send you, which I can and ought to do, to bride-well. This lenity, madam, remember you owe to your past connexion.

How just and impartial this gentleman in the administration of public justice, in countenancing a vice, by not punishing the guilty, when in his power! To cure an evil you must strike at the root. To suppress licen-

out of his house, lest, being seen, I should injure his reputation. I got into the coach, and was drove to Monmouth-street, where the gay lady of the manor was quickly changed into the decent chambermaid. Having purchased things useful and necessary to my present station in life, I put them into a box, and was carried to my lodging, which was clean and neat, though poor and mean.

I took in plain work for the present support, proposing to get into a genteel service. For this purpose I entered my name in a register office, the asylum of the unfortunate and worthless, from whence good characters are easier to be purchased, than procured, or merited. It was not long before I was strongly recommended, by persons who had never seen me, to a merchant, to wait upon a lady, with the character of a sober and good servant. The simplicity of my looks, and modest behaviour, strengthened the recommendation: I was accordingly taken into the family. I soon discovered my master to be a libertine. I had scarce been two months at my place, before he attempted to bribe me, by offering me several presents, which I refused to accept with the utmost disdain, to induce me to a compliance with his base designs. My former polluted

life I always reflected upon with horror, and resolved never to repeat the detested act. I sincerely repented of my past follies, and Heaven, I hope, will forgive them. My mistress was amiable and lovely in her person, of an obliging and forgiving temper, and possessed of every qualification requisite for the happiness of the married state. She was no stranger to my master's intriguing spirit, having severely suffered for it, and therefore kept a watchful eye over him, and her servants. Finding that he could not prevail by corrupting me, he was resolved upon forcing me to his lewd purposes. One day, being in my mistress's chamber, making the bed, my master, supposing her to be gone out, came in, and, after some entreaties, proceeded to violence, on which I immediately cried out for help, when my mistress, to his surprize, being in the next room, came in, and, after having severely, though justly reproached him for his low behaviour, which he little regarded, bid me, whose resistance deserved a better treatment, to pack up my things, and quit the house directly. To reply was useless, to obey necessary, lest jealousy should have suggested something worse.

Had I been an ignorant, poor country wench, how easy would it have been for my master to have succeeded in his attempt.—

If his rhetoric had failed, a present would have prevailed, and I should have thought it an honour to share with my mistress in the love and esteem of her husband.—

What do such villains deserve, who, instead of instructing, seduce the ignorant; instead of affording protection to the poor, use their poverty as the instrument to effect their ruin!

I procured a lodging at a chandler's shop; where, having occasion to lay out a little more money than I had received for wages, I had recourse to my purse, which seemed to be very light; upon opening it, I found, to my inexpressible concern, no more than ten guineas left in it, the rest having been borrowed by my friend the coachman, who, though a poor man, had valued himself much upon his reputation. I resolved to put up with the loss, since I believed it would be in vain to make the inquiry, and I was not willing to venture again in the presence of a justice of the peace.

Having entered my name at the accustomed office, in less than ten days I was recommended to the family of a reputable tradesman, for an upper servant. I went, with the former good character, was approved of, and hired. My master was a very pious, godly man, never missed the meeting on the Lord's day, had a cold dinner always

on that day, that his servants might attend divine service, and constantly every night the whole family were called together, for an hour, to prayer and to psalm singing.—Most of the assembly were so fatigued with the daily work, that they had much rather have been excused; so heavy to slumber and sleep were they, that they could neither pray with the spirit, nor the understanding, and generally answered amen with a yawn.

I had not been long in the house, before I found myself in the situation of Susanna of old, and my master, and his brother, who lived with him, to have all the seeming piety, and viciousness of the two elders. Each of them had cast a wishful look upon me; the outward sanctity serving as a veil to the lust raging within. The solicitation to sin from such pious souls, amazed and shocked me; and such base hearts, lodged under such godly countenances, had well nigh made me a convert to infidelity. I resisted their importunities, and upbraided them for their vile hypocrisy—for their pleadings of nature, against the feelings of divine grace.

My master's brother, to convince me that he meant not to desert and expose me, and to assure me of the reality and sincerity of his affection, produced a deed signed, wherein he had settled a hundred a year upon me

for life, and proposed to keep me at a country house, near town, with a servant. Great temptations these, for poverty and obscurity to contend with and surmount ! I answered the proposal, in saying, " Sir, you are mistaken in the person. I dare be honest, though poor and friendless ; and, believe me, I shall never purchase a subsistence at the price of my shame."

My master would frequently feign an indisposition, that he might have better opportunities of disclosing his passion, and attempting my virtue. He also vowed the utmost secrecy, and constancy ; and to induce me to a compliance with his base purpose, promised, after the decease of his wife, who was old and infirm, to marry me ; and, in the mean time, he would provide a genteel and retired lodging for me near the neighbourhood. I answered him by saying, " That he had seen nothing in my behaviour, since I had been in the family, which could persuade him that my principles were loose and dishonest ; that it would betray the confidence placed in me, and be the basest ingratitude, for the many singular marks of her esteem and regard, for me to think of, much more to act, so dishonourable a part by her." I recommended to him to consider how inconsistent such a proposal was with his piety and devotion, and that he should endeavour

to be the character he personated. As I found it would be in vain to combat with these holy men, who were resolved on their lustful gratification I quitted the service, to the disappointment of their lust, and the preservation of my internal peace, at a minute's warning.

I returned back to my former lodging, where, soon after my return, I was confined some months with a violent fever, which drained me of all my money, obliged me to pawn the principal, and best part of my clothes. When I had recovered a little strength, I went into service, but was so weak, through my late disorder, that, in a fortnight's time, I was obliged to leave it.— When I went back, my landlady, finding that little was to be made from me, put me into the back garret, without any fire-place, the windows broke, and stopped up with old rags, and no curtains on my bed, except what the cob-webs, which were plenty, afforded. In a few weeks I pawned every thing, excepting what was on my back, and being incapable of working, my landlady insisted on her rent weekly, or else I must seek a new lodging.

Through the cruel treatment of my landlady, and urgent necessity, I was compelled to go abroad, and to commence the beggar. Being a novice in the art, my begging was

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not very profitable. When I intreated charity, the answer was, "Wench get to service, you are lazy and idle, or, have you no parish, or, You ought to be sent to bridewell, such creatures ruin half the apprentices, and young fellows of the town."—These were hard and mortifying sayings; which, however, the poor must hear, without receiving any relief, or making any reply.

Impositions, it is true, are frequent; but is charity to be withheld from a mere supposition, or even the probability of being cheated? The appearance of distress frees us from the imputation of weakness in affording relief, it even requires immediate assistance, lest the party may perish before we can be satisfied of his merit.

Any relief would have been seasonable to me, for my landlady grew peevish and cross because I was deficient in my rent; my begging produced me no more than the bare supply of the wants of nature. One night, in a fit of drunkenness, after having abused and beat me, she turned me to the streets, and, having no money, I took up my lodging in an empty house.

How melancholy and comfortless was my present situation! I, who had lately an house elegantly furnished, and servants to attend my pleasure, had no place of refuge, no friend to relieve me, forsaken by every one,

and, to increase my wretchedness, a mind disordered with guilt. I was now convinced, from experience, the surest but severest master for teaching wisdom, that there was no true pleasure nor happiness, without innocence; and that pride, vanity, and loss of virtue, were generally succeeded by want, poverty, shame and infamy.

I was afraid of walking abroad in the day time, thinking my countenance was the indication of my past guilt, and that every one who looked upon me suspected me. The charity I had shewn to others, I now wanted. The time was come when I, who had so plentifully fed the poor, would have gladly accepted even of their refuse—when I, who had fed on the choicest delicacies, should want even a morsel of bread—when I, who had been adorned with the riches of the east, should be destitute even of a slender covering to hide my nakedness—when I, who had never been permitted to go out without a chair, or chariot, was to be exposed to the inclemency of the cold by night, and the intenseness of the heat by day. O! that I had preserved my virtue unsullied, what troubles should I have escaped; what happiness enjoyed! I had nothing to comfort me in this distress; but felt the tortures of an evil conscience, and had before me the pros-

pect of a miserable life, and the apprehension of an immediate death.

One day, walking in the public streets, and soliciting charity, Mr. S— passed me. I entreated relief for one almost perishing for want. The villain knew my voice, and remembered my person, though obscured with rags. He looked upon me with the greatest contempt, though conscious of the cause of this wretched appearance, and walked on. I followed, still begging, with prayers and tears, that he would relieve me, and afford some small matter to cover my nakedness, and to satisfy my present hunger. He replied, "be gone, wench," To which I replied, "Do you not remember the agreeable miss D—? Have you nothing to spare for one whom your cruel desertion hath reduced to this distressed and miserable condition?" He turned round and threw me a shilling, saying, "If you are tired of life, that will purchase you a dose, and put an end to your misery." He becked a coachman, drove off, and was soon out of sight. Horrid consolation! cruel recompense this to a needy wretch for lost virtue!

Such was my distress that I knew not what to do, nor where to go, no friend to apply to, and in want of every necessary of life; driven from parish to parish, without receiving relief from any; the street my

lodging, and the portion of dogs, picked up in the streets, my subsistence ; too honest to steal, and so despicable and worthless my appearance, that even charity withheld her hand, and feared it a sin to relieve me. In this wretched condition, being driven to despair, I resolved to make way with myself in the close of the evening. The night came on, when I made the attempt, but the instrument of death, by the interference of divine Providence, failed, the wicked intention was frustrated, and an infamous end prevented.

After I had recovered from the fright, and the horror of the act which I had attempted to commit, my guardian angel suggested a return to my disconsolate parents. "How many servants, said I, hath my father, who live at ease, and in the midst of plenty, whilst I am consuming and pining away for want ! How sweet is their rest on beds of down, whilst the cold earth is my bed, and the damp air my covering." Notwithstanding, a return appeared to me more terrible than the present wretchedness. How could I look them in the face, whom, by a base life, I had so much dishonoured and disgraced ; whose grey hairs I had well nigh brought down, with sorrow to the grave.— Scarce a day had passed, since my unhappy

departure, but what some tears had been shed.—Twice had my tender mother been snatched from the jaws of death, and my father, from a continual uneasiness of mind, was apprehended to be in a consumption.

Thrice I attempted to set out upon the journey, but the terrors of guilt made me afraid to pursue my resolution. “Alas! what reception can a wretch like me expect! Why did I not return before I was abandoned? What can be hoped from virtuous parents by a daughter, in whom, it was difficult to determine, whether her crime or misery was the greatest. O Heaven! hear, and, if thou canst, if thou hast any mercy in reserve, extend it now to the worst of sinners.”—Such were the sentiments of my soul, which I dared not, from a sense of my unworthiness, utter with my tongue. The silent prayer was heard, and I immediately, though the evening drew on, proceeded on my journey.

I had scarce got four miles from town, before I became excessive faint and weak, having nothing more for my support than water, crab-apples, and sloes; and my bed a barn, or out-house. When I asked alms, the relief was, generally, a large mastiff dog let loose to worry me, or I was threatened

with the round-house, if ever I came that way again.

In walking through a village I met with a footman, who, when in prosperity, as the deluded part of our sex call it, was my servant. As I entreated, in the most suppliant manner, at the door of a publican, for an hard crust or morsel of bread, he, looking earnestly upon me, and sighing, said, "It is she. O how fallen from what she was!"—Turning aside, he shed some tears. After a little interval, he said, "Mistress, for to call you madam would be to insult you in your distress, yet, when I recollect the former distance between us, and the many singular favours shewn me, a poor, ignorant, country fellow, that title, however ill-suiting with your present condition, is ever due from me; accept, accept my good mistress"—A flood of tears prevented him saying what. "May God reward your gratitude," said I. The sum given was, I suppose, all that the poor fellow had about him, consisting of half a guinea, four shillings, and a few pence.

This relief raised my drooping spirits.—My shoes being rotten, I went to a stall in the next village, to purchase an old pair.—In paying for them, I dropped half a crown, which the cobbler immediately took up, and obstinately refused to return it me. When

I insisted on having it, he called me some abusive names, and a mob having gathered about us, charged me with stealing his shoes, It was in vain to plead my innocence ; he had some reputation, and I had none ; he was well known, and I a stranger. They searched my pockets, and finding half a guinea, concluded, from my tattered and loathsome rags, that the charge of being a thief was just. For who would give half a guinea to a beggar ! I was immediately put into the cage, and the day following carried before a justice of peace in the neighbourhood. I informed him where and from whom I received the half guinea, but it signified nothing ; my accusers were powerful, they knew the justice, and circumstances were against me. After a sharp rebuke, his worship dismissed me, adding,—That I should be whipped through the village, if I was ever seen in it again. I did not choose to give any account of myself, and therefore the pleas used, in justification of my innocence, availed nothing. I was deemed a stroller, and treated accordingly.

The poor footman, I afterwards heard, was turned away from his place, for the justice wrote a letter to his master concerning the affair. His generosity towards me was suspected to be the effect of some secret roguery.

ry in him ; for it was not credible that he should have been so liberal of his own.—His master was a bitter enemy to all beggars ; none were seen at his gate, and what would have supported many indigent families, was given to his pack of hounds. He was worse than Dives of old, who, though he relieved not, suffered Lazarus to lie at his gates, and hindered not his dogs from giving the assistance he denied.

O ye rich men ! when ye are eating daintily, and are clothed delicately, let not the poor go away hungry and naked. When the wine sparkles in your cup, mix it with the widow's and orphan's tears ; and when the sound of the viol and tabret is at your feasts, forget not the groans and distresses of your fellow-creatures. The relief and assistance afforded to such will yield to the generous mind a delight superior to any thing which pleasure, luxury, and the most refined and highest gratification of sense, are capable of producing. Let the libertine boast of his pleasures, and midnight revels ; let the epicure talk of his feasting, and banqueting ; let avarice hug himself, when surveying his bags of useless gold : how mean, sordid, and brutish the satisfaction, when compared with that which the benevolent, the charitable, and the humane, sensibly feel

and experience, when they recollect the many whom their bounty and liberality have preserved from destruction, and from death. The charitable person is a common blessing to mankind; his charity also entitles him to the esteem and friendship of all good men, and secures him the daily and fervent prayers, both for his spiritual and temporal interest, of the disconsolate and unfortunate, whom he hath assisted and relieved. What he gives to others is not lost to himself, for his charity toward man is multiplied to him by blessings from Heaven.

Glad of my fortunate escape, I hastened from the barbarous villagers. After travelling about two miles, I sat down in a narrow lane, and reflected on the evil of money. I was in great distress for want of it, and lately escaped much greater for having it.— The poor wretch, thought I, who could impiously and premeditatedly perjure himself for half a crown, did no more than persons in higher station, and with less temptations, do daily.

I was roused from those reflections by the noise of a coach and six, which, on a sudden, was stopped near to the place where I was, by two persons, whom I suspected, by being out of livery, and armed (and my conjecture proved true) to be highwaymen. I was greatly terrified, contemptible as I ap-

peared, not from any apprehension of being robbed, for I had nothing to lose, but lest they should be induced, for secrecy, to prevent a discovery, to dispatch me. How solicitous was I to preserve a life, which a few days before would have been a pleasure to have been released from, and I had rashly attempted to destroy ! My fear proved false, for having finished their business at the coach, instead of receiving a bullet, they threw me, as they rode by, half a crown: thinking as many of these unhappy wretches do, that charity to the poor will be allowed some compensation for plundering the rich, and by relieving the distressed, to wash away the foulness of their theft. A conduct not more culpable than the miser's who endeavours, when dying, to atone for his extortion, oppression, and injustice, by building an almshouse, or an hospital, or distributing his thousands, in which he had no longer any property nor enjoyment amongst public charities.

I viewed the half crown, but the troubles lately undergone being fresh in my memory, by having such a piece of money in my possession. I did, what an East-India or bank director would scarce have done, I passed on and left it untouched. It was, as I afterwards heard, picked up by a waggoner, in

company with a passenger; who insisted upon dividing it, and the waggoner choosing to keep the whole, from words they went to blows, and, after having severely handled each other, to the no small diversion of the spectators, they compromised the matter by spending it.

I was now within six miles of my father's and being late in the evening, made up to a farm-house, humbly requesting a lodging, for that night, in the out-house or barn.—The people humanely (I must not say christianly, for though Christianity was professed in every parish through which I passed, it did not extend to practice, for I received no other benefit from Christians than what I might have received from savages) granted my request, giving me a mess of broth and some broken victuals. This I rather devoured than eat: it proved, however, a comfortable refreshment, for, having been so much fatigued and worried for three days past, I had taken little nourishment.—I was more anxious to secure my person from danger, than to satisfy my hunger.

I went sweetly to bed in the corner, covered over with clean straw. The weary know no difference between that and a bed of down. A cup of water to the thirsty is full as palatable as the richest wines, and to the

hungry the coarsest food is as acceptable as the stalled ox.

My misery, I thought, was drawn towards its final period, purposing to be at my father's village the next morning. But, alas! wretched as I was, greater wretchedness remained; my sufferings were not at an end. When I thought my sorrows near its crisis, fresh affliction befel me. Not more than two hours had sleep closed my eyes, before I was awaked by the alarming cry of "Fire, Fire." At first I thought it proceeded from a restless and troubled mind, and that I dreamed; but the flames approaching me, too fatally convinced me, that I was awake. I had only time to save a petticoat and a cloak, which, like Joseph's coat, was of many colours, by being patched with various pieces picked up on the road, or from the dunghills.

The flames raged violently, owing to the brisk wind, the want of water, and the backwardness of the country people in lending assistance to extinguish it. A fire, when it happens in a country village, is, like the small-pox, dreadful. Every one first takes care of himself, and leaves his neighbour to shift, being equally afraid of burning his fingers, as of catching the infection. There is a difference indeed between the two ca-

lamities ; for, after they have secured their own property, they will cheerfully offer their service, when the fire, by consuming every thing, hath left them little service to perform. In the small pox it is much worse, the house of the infected is marked for a pest-house which nobody will visit or come near, and its inhabitants, if necessitous and poor, are suffered to perish, if they cannot cure themselves ; for nothing is sent to relieve them, and prevent the contagion, which they so much dread, from spreading.

To return to the fire. I no sooner appeared out of the ruins, than they all cried out with one voice,—“That is she, that is she.”—“Lay hold of her,” says one ;—“Throw her into the flames,” says another ; “Knock her brains out,” says a third. The fire itself was dreadful, but these cries conveyed a terrible sound to my ears. The fire behind, and savages before, thirsting after my blood, for no fault of mine, nothing less, from their violent rage and continual clamour, was expected, than immediate death.—In the midst of these terrors I received a blow on my head from a piece of a brick, which quickly levelled me to the ground. I remained senseless for some time, and did not thoroughly recover before I found myself in the presence of his worship. The charge against me was setting the barn on

fire, which crime was aggravated by the sin of ingratitude, when the farmer mentioned the kind relief he had afforded me over night.

I was going to reply, but his worship ordered the commitment to be made out, and bound over the farmer, and his family, to prosecute me at the next assizes. I was immediately carried off in triumph, my hands and legs tied with a strong cord, and my body fastened to a dung cart, which was surrounded with oaken clubs, lest a poor creature, who could scarcely crawl, and almost dead with fright and the cruel treatment, should have attempted an escape. I verily believe that, had I had strength and resolution to have attempted it, I could have intimidated these Quixotes, and prevailed.

They led me through the village with loud huzzas, the boys at a distance pelting me, the curs barking, and the boors hooting and encouraging them. In my way to Chelmsford jail, they shewed me the gallows; at the sight of it I fainted; which they interpreted as a sign of guilt, and set up such a loud haloo, as roused me from my fit. When they had safely lodged me in prison, they gave three general huzzas, in which they were joined by the townsmen, and returned home sufficiently pleased, though they had

travelled hungry and thirsty, nearly twelve miles to satisfy their brutality.

I experienced not less inhumanity within, than I had without the prison walls. My fellow-prisoners chunned me, or made me the subject of their sport and derision. Incendiaries are reputed in the country the worst of villains; thieves and murderers being deemed innocent in comparison with them. Here I continued about three months, in the greatest distress, feeding only on the scraps and crumbs which fell from the other prisoner's tables, which, it is easily conceived, were not very plentiful. I had no fire to warm me, no bed but the floor, and not always that, being at times turned out into the yard, and exposed all night to the inclemency of the weather. The money sent from charitable and well-disposed people for the support of friendless and destitute prisoners, I received no benefit from, the nature of my crime excluding me.

The assizes at last came on, and my trial was one of the first on the list of prisoners. When I was brought into court, and placed at the bar, I appeared such a deplorable object, that humanity was shocked at the sight, being oppressed with filth and rags; and indignation at the supposed crime, was quickly turned into pity for the wretched criminal. When ordered to hold up my hand, I

fainted, not from a consciousness of guilt : (would to God that I had been innocent in every other respect as I was in this) but at the sight of Mr. S—, who sat on the bench, and who, as I afterwards understood, was the high sheriff of the county that year.

When they had recovered me, they proceeded in the examination of the evidence, which being cross examined by a worthy counsellor, who, from commiserating my wretched condition, generously undertook the management of my cause, proved vague and contradictory; and I was, to the satisfaction and pleasure of every person present, honorably acquitted. My worthy friend the counsellor put a crown into my hand, whose example was followed by the judge on the bench, and the rest of the gentry.— Among the rest Mr. S— drew near and offered me a guinea; I withdrew my hand and fainted away. In the fit I was carried out of court, and ordered to be properly taken care of. When I recovered, I found myself at a little ale-house, and all the money lost or carried off by the humane carriers. The house I was obliged to quit immediately; guests who have no money to spend, finding no welcome in such places, especially so forlorn and deplorable a wretch as I was; their charity is to take from all, but to give to none.

I was now reduced to the utmost distress, having nothing more to cover me than what the fire had left me, and began to despair of ever seeing my parents; my confinement, and the hardships I had suffered in it, so much impaired my health, that I expected death every hour, and even prayed for it. In this melancholy mood I was alarmed by a loud huzzaing, and, turning about, saw a coach and six, with a grand equipage, in which were the sheriff and his lady returning from the assizes. As soon as it came near I fell into a fit, the coachman immediately stopp'd, and Mr. S—, at the request of his lady, whom he had acquainted with my distress, as it appeared before the court, assisted his servants in recovering me. When I recovered, seeing him by my side, I fastened my eyes upon him, and forgetful of his rank, where I was, and who stood round me, said, "O! Sir, behold before you the once lovely and amiable Miss —." I could utter no more, my speech failed, and I swooned away. But how great was my surprise, when my senses returned, to find the coach gone and myself alone!

The cause, as I afterwards understood, was, that Mr. S—, recollecting my person, and for fear of a discovery by his lady, who was coming to my assistance, hurried back

to the coach, and ordered the servant to drive briskly on. It was impossible to conceal his confusion from his lady, who warmly pressed him to know the cause of his uneasiness. This he artfully evaded, by saying it was a shock that he had received from seeing so young a creature in such a helpless and destitute a situation. This did not satisfy his lady, who observed him to be much dejected the whole evening, notwithstanding the variety of agreeable company present to divert him. She went out, and sent for one of the servants, who was present at the interview, and asked him what conversation, if any, had passed between his master and the beggar. He modestly declined an answer, she persisted in knowing, and threatened him with the loss of his place if he did not immediately comply. He then told her what I had said, and the consequence of it, my falling into a fit. This stimulated her to a further inquiry, which, Mr. S— refused to gratify, and turned it off with a laugh. She sent a servant, in whom she thought she could confide, in quest of me, with peremptory orders, if he found me, to bring me to her without any change of apparel.

Mr. S— suspected the design, and prevented its effect, by ordering the servant to keep out of the way a few days, and then to

return and acquaint his lady that he could not find me. This was done, but not to the satisfaction of his lady. In the interim Mr. S—, fearing that his villainy should be discovered, and his reputation injured, sent three of his servants by different ways to find me out; who for a considerable reward were to carry me out of the country, and to dispose of me in such a manner that he should never more hear of me, nor fear a return.

This design would have succeeded, had it not been for the interposition of Providence in my favour. Two of these ruffians were determined to keep together, and to share the reward, if they should find me, between them. They stood some time close to the place where I was, debating which way they should take. One said, she cannot be gone far, and by her ragged appearance she will be easily discovered. Hearing this, I listened with more attention, being on the other side of the hedge. I am surprized, replied the other, what should occasion my master to interest himself so much concerning such a hunter, to offer so large a sum of money to find her out? These words I interpreted in my favour, thinking that his conscience had awakened him to a just sense of his ill-treatment, and that he was willing to give me some satisfaction for the wrongs

he had done me, and the distress he had brought upon me, by affording me some present relief, and endeavouring to bring about a reconciliation with my friends. These favourable sentiments were quickly erased by the other's answer; "surely, said he, there must have been some secret transaction with the wench, who, I suspect, was not always what she appears to be, that he should be so anxious to have her carried off, or, what he seemed to insinuate would please him better, to have her murdered." I was so shocked at this last word, that I had well nigh betrayed myself by going to scream out, "murder!" Here they left off speaking, and walked on.

How melancholy was my condition! I dreaded to go forward, lest I should fall into the hands of my pursuers. The shaking of a leaf affrighted me; a pistol and a bloody knife were ever present to my sight, sleeping or waking; and the sight of a man made my heart to faint, and to sink within me. In this confusion of mind, I resolved to lie by all day under some friendly hedge, and to travel at night, being the safest. Here another scene of distress arose. What was I to do for my subsistence? From whence was I to be supplied? I dared not shew myself in any village, for I doubted not but in-

quiry had been made, and a price set upon my head. My feet were full of blisters, having neither shoes nor stockings, only a few rags wrapped round them; the nights were very dark, and being obliged to keep near the road (lest I should wander out of the way) which was the more dangerous for my person, I could not travel far at a time. For though I was within a few miles of my father's, it was not possible for me, from the circumstances I was in, to reach thither in less than three days. In the uncertainty what to do, and how to provide subsistence for myself, I came to a field of turnips, on which I fed heartily, though I believe not much to the detriment of the owner. The ditches supplied her with drink, for whom, formerly, the choicest wines were not thought sufficiently good. I had two other dishes, one (which from reading French authors I had learned to be good and strengthening) was young frogs; these I had in great plenty; the other proved a more delicious morsel, which was birds that I caught at roost. I had my tarts too, homely as they were, made of hips and haws.

This was my support and repast till I got to my father's village. I was twice in danger of being taken. One evening some country lads were out a beating, and as they were beating the bush, the noise awaked me,

and starting up, their surprise was so great, that away ran the lads, leaving a few birds behind them (which made me an elegant dinner the next day) crying as they ran,—“The devil, the devil.” They reported the next day among their neighbours, that they had seen the devil in such a field. This report gained so much credit, that no one, for some months after, ventured near the place after dark.

One morning some gentlemen being out a hunting, the dogs unfortunately took to the place where I lay, and had not the hunters came up and called them off, I should have been torn in pieces, they left me, however, wounded and bloody, and the huntmen, without asking who I was, and how I came there, pursued the chase. Notwithstanding my condition, I thought myself happy; for I had rather have been killed by the dogs, than to have been delivered into the hands of my persecutor.

After much difficulty and great hazard, I arrived at my father's, but not secretly. I was discovered by some men who were ploughing and immediately taken into custody, and confined in a barn, with half a dozen of the stoutest fellows in the village to watch over and guard me. This was done in conformity to a letter sent to every parish throughout the county, after the return of

guilty than yourself. Repair, if thou canst, the loss of a good and virtuous daughter, till thy villany made her otherwise. How canst thou punish that creature for a cheat, impostor, and thief, when thou thyself art guilty of the same crimes? Thou didst steal away my daughter, imposed upon her credulity, and spoiled her of her virtue. Boast not of thy honours, nor thy ancestors' greatness, thou hast stained the one, and disgraced the other. Hang thyself by the side of that miserable creature, then you will do both me and your country justice. Think not, villain, great as thou art, that thou shalt die in peace; vengeance will pursue thee; heaven will pity an injured parent's wrongs, and blast thee for the perjured deed. Restore to me my daughter."

Mr. S—, recovering himself a little from the confusion and fright which this rencounter had occasioned, without making the least reply, but with a smile of contempt at my father, most audaciously commanded his servants to take me up, and toss me into the cart. Damned villain, said my father, dost thou make a sport of my misfortunes? O ye powers above (lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven) can you behold this, and suffer such a wretch to live, who insults thy being and dares thy vengeance, by glorying in his wickedness." Take up the wench, said Mr.

S—, regard not an old fool. To whom my father answered, "Whatever that wretch's crimes are, I know not, but be they ever so vile and infamous, she is a babe to thee in wickedness. Why have I lived to see this day, to have my sorrows sported with by the insolent and bitter reproaches of the author of my daughter's ruin?"

I mustered up all my strength, and breaking loose from them, threw myself at my father's feet, and cried out in the most tender manner, "O my father! my father! behold prostrate at your feet your lost child, and protect her from that villain's cruelty, who hath robbed me of my innocence, and now seeks to deprive me of my life."

The spectators stood amazed; when taking courage, I proceeded, "Mistake me not, most worthy sir, for an impostor, I am really and truly that unfortunate daughter of your's, whose shame and loss you have so long bewailed and lamented. Say that you forgive her, and her miseries will be forgotten, and she will die in peace: say that you forgive her, and she will bear with pleasure the severest punishment that inhuman wretch can devise, or the law inflict. To convince you, dear sir, that I am no impostor, behold (uncovering my arm) this mark which distinguished me at my birth, and know me to be yours."

My father, whose heart before was meditating a most dreadful revenge against Mr. S—, for his perfidy and baseness, was now melted into softness: a flood of tears burst forth, and, with that paternal affection and tenderness, as if I never had offended, embraced me and fainting in my arms, cried, "O ! my child ! O ! my child !"

Mr. S—, seized the opportunity, and taking horse, rode off, not without the most bitter curses of the spectators.—In this posture we continued, when my mother and brothers, who had been apprised of the discovery, came running to see me. O what a scene of joy ensued !—Dirty and loathsome as I was, I thought there would have been no end of their tears and embraces. When the first transports of joy were over, and they saw my ragged and wretched condition, immediately one of my sisters pulled off her petticoat, another her gown, my brother brought me a pair of shoes and stockings, and my father covered me with his great coat. My eldest brother was in the house, making a large fire, and giving orders to the servants for an elegant dinner. He sent to the shepherd to kill three of the finest sheep, and the largest ox in the pasture, which, with three hogsheads of old beer, were given to the poor the next day.

I was conducted home from the barn amidst the embraces of my relations, and acclamations of the villagers.

No sooner had I entered my father's house, but a little favourite dog heard my voice, and seemed to partake of the general happiness, by running towards me, wagging his tail, and licking my feet. After we were all seated, my father broke silence with this ejaculation, "I thank thee, O God, for thou hast heard my prayer: I have seen my daughter who was lost; I shall now die in peace." Words cannot express the joy of the whole village for my return. The church bells rang for three days, the whole family being esteemed and beloved, far and near, for their piety and extensive charity.—The rich and the poor vied with each other; the rich in compliments, and the poor in blessings, on this occasion. The joy of the whole family was damped, by a violent ague and fever, which seized me the fifth day after my arrival, occasioned by my former hard living, to which I had been so long accustomed.

This reduced me to the point of death, and overwhelmed the whole family with deepest concern. However, at the end of two months, to the great comfort of my parents, I was pronounced to be out of danger, and in a few

weeks after I was restored to my former state of health.

I requested of my father one evening, to relate what passed upon missing me. "I called," said my father, that very morning you took the fatal airing, to inquire after Mr. S—'s health, who had left a note signifying his intention of being with us early on the appointed day. Leaving my compliments, I returned, nothing doubting the sincerity of his profession. But how great was our surprize, when the wished for day came, but no Mr. S—, no servant, nor any intelligence! After the ecclesiastical hour had elapsed, I took my horse, and with your eldest brother, rode away directly to Mr. S—'s, under the apprehension of a relapse, or some new accident, having not the least suspicion of a flight, or a desertion. When we came to the house, all the information we could obtain from the servants was, that the horses were returned without the coach or company. This raised in me suspicions of his dishonesty, and, without hesitation, we rode off to London, and put up at an inn in the neighbourhood of Grosvenor-Square.—We immediately went out in search of Mr. S—, who we were given to understand, was in Essex, and expected that week to be married. I endeavoured to convince them he was not there, and hinted some things

which did not speak much in recommendation of his honour and character, it was received with a loud laugh, so well established was Mr. S—'s reputation in the opinion of his neighbours, whose leaving of town, and disposing of his house, they lamented as a great loss, both to the poor and the trading people.

“After spending two or three days in town to no purpose, we returned back, full of grief and vexation of heart. When we arrived, great was the joy of your mother and brethren, at seeing those return safe, whom they feared to have been murdered. This joy was succeeded by sorrow, when they observed that you was not with us; but greater was their affliction, when we declared that we could not, after the most diligent inquiry and search, procure the least intelligence concerning you, and the ill treatment we had received.

“When I reflected on the designed villainy, your lost virtue, and the dreadful consequences of it, infamy and disease, what curses and execrations did I pour on the author's head! How have I often wished, that you had perished before you had seen the light, that you had been crushed to death within your mother's womb, or that I could have plunged a dagger in your breast, to have prevented your eternal shame, and my

sorrows ! Protect, O Heaven ? was my constant prayer, a virtuous daughter from a villain's lust, and avenge her wrongs."

A few years had passed, when one day, whilst relating some of my adventures to my sisters, which they frequently desired me to do, being in the little parlour, we were alarmed by a violent rap at the door. Soon after, a lady and gentleman in deep mourning were introduced by my mother, who from the equipage attending them, and their polite behaviour, had the appearance of persons of fortune and distinction.

We immediately rose up, paid our respects, and offered to retire, but the lady insisted on our staying. We accordingly sat down again, and the lady began the conversation : " Madam (addressing my mother) if my information is right, you had an unfortunate daughter. I am sorry (seeing my mother endeavouring to conceal her tears) to revive our grief. Is she yet alive ? Where can I meet with her ?" To which I replied, observing my mother's confusion, " I am, madam, that unfortunate daughter you speak of."

Hearing this, the lady hastily rose from her seat, and, embracing me, said, " I congratulate you, Miss, upon the legacy bequeathed you, justly merited by the singu-

lar hardships you endured, and, I hope, will be received as some kind of compensation and satisfaction for the injuries done you by my husband."

This surprized us all. But the lady proceeded, saying, "Mr. S—, whom you are too well acquainted with, was my husband; he was taken suddenly ill of a fever, and struck with deep remorse for his baseness towards you, hath, with my consent and approbation, left you in his will ten thousand pounds, and entreated that you would accept it, as it was meant by him, for a token of his sincere repentance for the wrongs done you." Without waiting for a reply, Mrs. S— put into my lap a parcel of bank notes amounting to the sum mentioned.

At this interval of silence my father came into the room, when the lady, after having informed him who she was, was so obliging as to repeat what had passed, adding, that Mr. S— never enjoyed any peace of mind after the interview at the barn: he took no pleasure in his favourite diversion of hunting, and avoided the company and conversation of his intimate friends. His countenance was fallen, his vivacity gone, and he seemed to give himself up to melancholy.— He usually reposed himself after dinner on a couch; in these short slumbers he would

frequently start and groan, which I attributed to weakness, occasioned by his indisposition. The day preceding his fever, which put an end to his life, he had scarce lain down an hour, before he cried out, "I know thee—Begone—Trouble me not—Thy injuries are."—Here I awaked him, when he appeared to be in the greatest terror of mind, saying to him, "What means this confusion? Why these broken sentences?" He answered me, fainting and trembling, Leave me to myself: yet I dare not trust myself alone; sorrow lies heavy here (putting his hand to his breast) lead me to my chamber; death I find to be approaching, and I will disclose such villainy, if thy pious and chaste ear can bear to hear it, which will convince you that there hath been too much reason for this sadness." When in the agonies of death, he cried, "O! that I could but see her before I die, and obtain her pardon, then would my troubled soul be at rest!" He said no more, fetched a deep sigh, and died.

This affecting account of his death drew tears from all our eyes, and a solemn silence ensued. At last my father spoke,—
"May the Almighty accept his repentance, and the horrors of a guilty conscience be admitted as a sufficient punishment for his crimes!" This scene of sorrow being over,

Mrs. S— took her leave, with an assurance of a lasting friendship between the families.

Mrs. S— was polite, well bred, and sensible. Her education had been different from that of females in general. She could read a book in Homer with the same ease as she could work a piece of paint, and translate an ode of Anacreon with the same spirit as she could sing an Italian air. She was a proof of what the pride of the other sex will never own, that the female mind, if properly cultivated, is capable of equal attainments with their lords. It was difficult to say, whether she excelled most in the accomplishment of her mind or person. Her knowledge did not make her what it frequently doth the other sex, proud, confident, and overbearing, for she was of an obliging and condescending temper, and rather seemed desirous of learning, than dictating, where her superiority of understanding was acknowledged. She was somewhat singular in works of charity; to avoid ostentation, she never admitted any application, but privately inquired after real objects, whom, when discovered, she as privately relieved, insomuch that she was looked upon not to be the most charitable lady in the neighbourhood, even by those whom her secret bounty had made happy. She was equally careful to prevent applications, as to avoid

acknowledgments, and her only thanks for her goodness, was the approbation of her conscience.

About a week after this accident, Mrs. S— paid us a visit with the same gentleman, Sir Robert B—, who was her only brother, in possession of a large estate, a modest discreet young gentleman, brought up liberally, and untainted with the fashionable vices, pride, luxury, gaming, keeping, &c. which in these times distinguish the gentleman from the clown. After visiting and revisiting each other for a twelvemonth, in this friendly manner, and spending in turn a week at each other's manor, Sir Robert and Mrs. S—, walking one morning with me in the garden, Mrs. S— left us at the turn of a walk.

Sir Robert embraced the opportunity which his sister's absence afforded him of disclosing his passion, addressed me in these words: "Since I have had the pleasure, Miss, of your acquaintance, I have contracted something more than a mere respect for your person. I am convinced that your merit may entitle you to one of higher rank, but I will be confident to say, that no one shall endeavour more to deserve your affection than myself. The connexion I have proposed to you is entirely agreeable to my

sister, who desires it." Here he stopped, expecting my answer with some uneasiness and anxiety, fearful, as I had somewhat reddened, that the address was disapproved of.

After a little pause I replied, "That tho' I doubted not of the sincerity of his passion, and that his design was honourable, he must excuse a positive answer in this affair, for I should submit my will to be directed and governed by that of my parents, whose consent obtained, there would be no objection on my part to the honour he intended to do our family." This answer was received by him with great politeness.

The dinner bell ringing, we walked towards the house, and in the way meeting with my father, he left me, and turned aside with him, and discovered the secret of his love, also what he had said to me, and the answer returned by me. "My son," said my father, "for by that name from this time I shall call thee, thou hast my consent. I have observed with pleasure your affection for my daughter, and resolved within myself, if it was sincere, that nothing should be wanting in me, to contribute to your happiness. Come, Sir, give me your hand."

Meeting with me in the hall, "Stop a minute, daughter," said my father, "let me present you with a rarity that I have

just met with in our garden. "What, Sir, is that? I replied, for I think there is nothing rare in it." "No flower, my dear, I do assure you," said my father, "for that withereth and perisheth, but that, whose goodness will never fade, wither, or perish, an honest and worthy man, an husband for you, and a son for me." This said, he presented Sir Robert to me, who, saluting me with great warmth, said, "Now is my happiness in this life completed, having not one wish more left to be answered."

Scarce was the salutation over, when my father received the following note.

"Mrs. S—'s compliments to Mr. D—, and desires the favour of a few minutes private conversation in the summer house at the bottom of the garden."

My father, wondering at the singularity of the invitation, left us in the hall, and went to meet Mrs S— at the place appointed. Sir Robert, observing me to be somewhat uneasy, said, "I do assure you, my dear sister's designs are honourable; her intention in this conversation is to increase the family connexion, by a proposal to your father of marrying your eldest brother, they having for a long time, unknown to any of the family, entertained an esteem for each other; and when, as you thought, they were amus-

ing themselves in the garden with gathering of flowers, they were discoursing of love, and contriving how to procure the consent of your father. If you please, we will walk into the back parlour, where your brother is expecting, with great anxiety and fear, the issue of this conference in the summer-house, and he will confirm to you the truth of what I have now declared."

We had not been longer in the parlour than sufficient for my satisfaction, when my father and Mrs. S— came in, whose looks shewed matters were settled to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. My father, addressing himself to my brother said,— "Young man, this lady hath asked you in marriage; let it be your care to preserve the good opinion she entertains of you. As you could not have flattered yourself with being connected with a lady of such worth and fortune, endeavour by your behaviour to merit the one, and by a tender and affectionate regard to deserve the other." My brother bowed, and Mrs. S— advancing towards him, they embraced each other with that tenderness and affection, which sufficiently convinced us of the reality and sincerity of their passion.

After dinner we retired to the back parlour, where we fixed the Thursday following for the solemnization of the marriages, which

was to be at the same church. Mrs. S— and her brother remained at my father's, sending to town, by an express, for what things were necessary. The affair was now no secret in the village, and every one rejoiced in the happy union. A grand entertainment was prepared, to which the neighbouring gentry were invited; and that the poor might be partakers of our happiness, two hundred pound were ordered to be distributed among them; and sheep and oxen, with strong beer and punch, were given to the villagers.

We went to church, amidst the prayers, praises, and acclamations of a thousand people, who were assembled on this joyful occasion. Open house was kept for the gentry for a month, which was spent with the greatest mirth and festivity. We continued about six months at my father's, and then took our leave, each retiring to his respective manor, with the promise of meeting together annually every Christmas, so long as our parents lived at the farm-house.—Tears of joy and sorrow were shed by every person in the village at our departure, many of whom accompanied us some miles on our journey.

A few months after our settlement, Sir Robert was called upon the grand jury for the county; he attended the assize, and stay-

ed in court to hear the trial of a poor old man, who stood charged with the murder of his companion. When the prisoner was brought to the bar, his age, grey hairs, and decent deportment moved the court to pity him. The prisoner, addressing himself to the bench, said, "My lord, I am a weak, ignorant man, and unacquainted with law; I therefore humbly entreat of your lordship the favour of having counsel to advise and assist me." The judge immediately applied to one Mr. R—, saying, "Brother R—, you are a known friend of the distressed, this old man must be your client." He answered, "My lord, I am ready and willing to undertake his cause, from your lordship's recommendation, and from a principle of humanity, though our profession, I must confess, are not fond of such clients." Then turning to the prisoner, he said, "Take courage, old man, your countenance seems too honest for a villain."

In the course of the trial, circumstances were strong against him: the deceased and he left the farmer's house together; the deceased was found murdered the next morning, having his throat cut; the prisoner's hand and shirt were stained with blood; a penknife, which he confessed to be his property, was found in the yard, bloody, the

buckles and a little bag, having the name of the deceased upon it, were taken out of his pocket.

"Notwithstanding," said his counsel, "these circumstances are very strong, I believe the prisoner to be innocent. Not to mention what had been proved to the court, that the greatest harmony and friendship subsisted between the two old men, the prisoner's character, from gentlemen of the first rank, whom he hath had the honour of serving, of a tender and humane disposition:—Would he not, had he been the thief and murderer, have attempted to escape?—Would he have suffered himself to have been taken fast asleep? Would the sight of his friend have so affected him, as to have thrown him into strong convulsions for three hours? Would he—" Here (a young man, who stood by the prisoner, having taken out his watch, to tell him the hour) the prisoner interrupted, "My lord, I have a favour to ask of your lordship, that this young man may be permitted to acquaint the court how he came by his watch, for it was the watch of my deceased friend, whose name is under the lining of the case, and the seal affixed to the chain I gave him." The counsel called for the watch, and taking out the lining, found an engraving with the following words,

"The legacy of James D'Anvil, Esq. to his servant, Thomas Goodfellow, for his honest and faithful services." The young man being interrogated how he came by the watch, answered, that he bought it of William Thompson, servant of the prosecutor, and the principal evidence against the prisoner, for five guineas, whose receipt, and the silversmith's, of whom Thompson bought it, he had.

Thompson was immediately called for, being fetched from a public-house, when he came into court, was asked, if he knew that watch, and to whom he had sold it? He answered, with great assurance, that he had bought it in Lombard-street, of one Mr. Feignwell, a silver-smith, for five guineas, about six months ago (four months before the murder was committed) and he had sold it to that young man. The receipts being compared, the counsel soon discovered that they were the same hand writing, and a gentleman in court, whose residence was in Lombard-street, declared, upon oath, that he knew of no such person for thirty years past. After several questions put to Thompson, to which he gave evasive and contradictory answers, the counsel for the prisoner rose up, and directly charged him with the robbery and murder, moved the court that he might be taken into custody, and added,

that he was under no doubt of proving him to be the thief and murderer. This declaration, expressed with some warmth, so much affected and intimidated Thompson, that he confessed his guilt, and the various circumstances attending it. The old man was honourably acquitted, and a collection made for him at the request of Mr. R—.

Sir Robert afterwards dined with the judge who spoke very respectfully of Mr. R—'s abilities, and great humanity, mentioning several cases of the like nature with the old man's, particularly one of an unfortunate and miserable young woman, who had been tried for an incendiary. How pleased was Sir Robert to hear the name of the protector and defender of my innocence, whom he had endeavoured in vain to find out !

After dinner Sir Robert took his leave of the judge, and went to seek for Mr. R—, whom he found at the tavern with the grand jury. After some compliments, they entered very freely into conversation, which was so agreeably to Sir Robert, that he made Mr. R— promise to spend a day or two at his manor, when he had finished the circuit.— When Sir Robert came home, “ Well, my dear (said he) I have joyful news to tell thee; the old man is honourably acquitted, and by the means of him who was your de-

liverer, who hath promised to spend a day or two with us." "Joyful and welcome news indeed, my dear!" I replied. "O how do I long to see the good man, and on my knees to thank and bless him! We must—" "I know your meaning," said Sir Robert, "we should, when in our power, shew our gratitude by deeds as well as by words." "You understand me well, Sir," said I, "and I shall leave the acting part, which I am sensible will be pleasing, to you."

The long wished for day came, and, after breakfast, Sir Robert rode out to meet my worthy friend. He returned about twelve, very uneasy, not having seen nor heard anything concerning him. We went to dinner, which we had deferred, expecting every moment his appearance, being reckoned punctual in his engagements, and exact in the performance of his promises. In this uneasiness we observed a servant, riding up full speed to the gate, and ringing the bell, soon after the master appeared, when Sir Robert, knowing him to be Mr. R—, rose immediately, and ran himself to open the gate.

When Mr. R— had alighted, he was introduced into the parlour, where I stood with the utmost expectation, to salute him, with tears of joy and gratitude.

I went up to him, and embraced him in the most affectionate manner. Upon which, turning to Sir Robert, he said, "Doth your lady salute every visitor in this manner?—Surely she hath mistaken me for her husband." "You will cease to wonder, Sir," said I, "at this behaviour, when I acquaint you, that to you I owe the preservation of my life. The miserable, loathsome wretch, whom your goodness in pleading her cause saved from an infamous death, when tried for an incendiary, now stands before you, with a heart full of gratitude." And, Sir," said Sir Robert, interrupting me, "as to the preservation of that life, I am indebted for all my happiness, I must insist upon your acceptance of this small note, (a thousand pounds) small in comparison of your merit, and the service done me, for the prisoner's fee."

Mr. R— stood amazed and confounded at these extraordinary incidents. Recovering himself from the surprize, he replied, "Madam, the service I then rendered you, proceeded from that inward feeling I have always for persons in distress, whom to relieve, when I have the power and opportunity, either by alms, or as was your case, pleading their cause, is the only sensible pleasure that I enjoy. The satisfaction I now receive from this event, is not, madam,

from your gratitude ; but the reflection of having preserved the life of so amiable and valuable a woman, whose piety does honour to religion, and whose example is an ornament to her sex. . In having saved your life, madam, I find myself the happy instrument of assisting and supporting a number of poor and industrious families, through that charitable and beneficent spirit you are daily exerting ; the orphan, the widow, and the destitute, finding in you a true and warm friend. This, madam, which is the pride of you, and your worthy husband, is held a meanness with too many of your fortune and distinction ; who, instead of lessening, increase the distresses of the indigent, by luxury and extravagance."

Mr. R— was here interrupted by the servants' bringing in a dish of fish. Sir Robert, addressing himself to Mr. R—, said, " Your profession, Sir, is in a flourishing and prosperous state. I mention with concern, not pleasure, for the mischiefs it produced and the distress it hath brought upon mankind." " I little expected," replied Mr. R—, " such a reflection from a gentleman of your politeness and understanding. The law, Sir, is the grand bulwark of the subject's right, liberty and property. Let the vulgar be satisfied ; cancel it. What will be the conse-

quence? Violence, slavery and tyranny.—What protection would the poor man have, from the insolence and oppression of his wealthy and powerful neighbour? Is it right to leave the honest and industrious a continual prey to cheats and sharpers without any remedy? Do you think, Sir Robert, that you would, as now, be secure in the comfortable and peaceable enjoyment of your estate?—No profession is to be censured for abuses. If an empiric administer a poison for a cordial, is medicine of no use? The law makes not rogues, but punishes them; it distresses not, but relieves and protects, the good. I should be glad to see men honest, that our courts of justice may be shut up, which, from the multitude of causes before them, might be kept open day and night. We need not seek for clients: the pride, avarice and luxury of the age, furnish the profession with more suits than they can properly manage. If men would be content with their own, live consistent with their station, and not indulge in expences, which neither their fortune nor industry can support, Westminster Hall would be very cool. The fault lies with yourselves, and the censure of the law is unjust.*

Whilst we were at dinner, a beggar came to the gate, to whom was given the usual relief. The man still continuing at the gate,

the servant was sent to know what he particularly wanted. The servant returned, acquainting me that he was very desirous of speaking to me in private. I ordered him to come in, and have a dinner in the kitchen.

Mr. R— entertained us with so many pleasant stories, that had not Sir Robert refreshed my memory, the poor man would have been forgotten. "If you please, my dear, with Mr. R—'s permission, I will order him into the parlour." The servant returned with the old man's refusal, and his intreaty to speak with me in private. "It is neither prudent nor safe, madam, said Mr. R—, to comply with such a request, for, being a stranger (though his poverty doth not prove him to be a rogue, too many are so) he is not entitled to such confidence." I am of your opinion, said Sir Robert, and therefore (speaking to the servant) I insist upon his coming into the parlour; if he refuses send him away."

When he came into the room, the sight of Mr. R— surprised him, and falling down, embracing his knees, prayed to God most fervently to bless and preserve him, who had preserved his life from destruction. Mr. R— immediately recollected his client, and taking him by the hand, lifted him up, saying, "Now, old man, I have one request

to make in return, which, your obligation to me being so great as you say, you must not deny me. What private business had you with this lady? Speak honestly, for there is not any thing that you can say, which we shall be afraid of hearing.

The poor fellow trembled, and begged, with tears, to be excused. When Mr. R—, not with his usual countenance of good nature, but with a kind of anger, said. "Look you, old man, I insist on knowing immediately what you have to say to this lady, or I shall look upon you to be a designing knave, and will certainly have you punished for basely attempting to disturb the peace of a worthy family."

This threat accomplished what entreaty could not. "Behold then, madam (falling on his knees) your footman, who, for the relief afforded you in that distress, which even to this present time I think of with sorrow, lost his place, and ever since hath met with a series of misfortunes, which would have terminated, hath it not been for the interposition of that honourable gentleman, in an ignominious death."

Sir Robert, who knew all my history, was highly pleased at the reluctance shewn by the old man to discover the truth, and Mr. R— commended his prudence in the affair. Sir Robert, smiling, raised him up, and, ring-

ing the bell, ordered the servant to provide him with a suit of clothes, and to have a bed made up for him.

When he was gone, "Well, my dear, said Sir Robert, the relief he afforded, however injurious it proved to you both, was well intended, and therefore should have its reward. A tenant of mine is lately dead, who was possessed of a small farm, about sixty pounds a year; in this farm, my dear, I intend to fix him, which will afford him a comfortable subsistence for the remainder of his life."—I was delighted with this instance of Sir Robert's love towards me, in rewarding the goodness of a grateful servant.

The week being ended, Mr. R—took his leave, whom we accompanied some part of his journey to town, having engaged his word to visit us whenever he came into the country, and his business would permit. He parted from us, with wishing us length of days, an uninterrupted continuance of our present happiness, and proper use of those advantages, which, through the good providence of God, I was in possession of.

On our return home, through a back lane, near our dwelling house, we overtook a poor creature, with one child on her back, and two walking by her side. Sir Robert stopped the chariot, and ordered the ser-

vant to inquire from whence she came, and who she was. She answered him that she was an unfortunate woman, and had lived in credit and reputation, but now reduced to the greatest distress through the folly and misconduct of her husband, who having squandered away his substance in drinking and gaming, and being deeply in debt, had deserted her, and gone abroad : that she came from London, and was going to his relations in Essex, to see if they would put her into some way of business, to enable her to provide for her helpless and destitute children. By this time we were at home, and, having alighted, Sir Robert bid the servant take the woman and her children into the kitchen, and to let them have whatever they wanted.

We had scarce been seated five minutes before the servant came in, and said the woman would not stay. Sir Robert replied,—“You have not, I hope, used her ill? her poverty may have been her misfortune, not her fault.” The servant answered, “The woman, Sir, hath received no abuse nor insult, from any of the servants, she asked whose house this was, and, being informed, to the surprise of us all, she rose in a hurry, and seemingly in great uneasiness, and would not be prevailed upon by any means, to stay to take the least refreshment.” Sir Robert ordered the servant to fetch her back

immediately ; then turning to me, said,—
“What can this behaviour mean ?” I replied,
“My curiosity to know is not less than
yours.”

The servant finding entreaties useless,
employed threats, which brought her to a
compliance. When she came into the par-
lour she fainted away. After a short inter-
val she recovered : when Sir Robert civilly
requested to know the reason of her leaving
his house so abruptly, and in such confusion.

“Is my name or person so terrible as to
frighten you away ?” She answered, “Ex-
cuse me, worthy sir, and permit me to go.”

“Good woman, said I, be not afraid to speak,
it is a pleasure to Sir Robert to comfort and
assist persons in trouble and distress,” She

replied, “When I reflect on my former
wickedness, madam, I may justly fear, what
it is in your power to take revenge. The
injury I did you—” “Me, good woman ?”

“Assure me, sir, upon your honour, that you
will neither detain nor punish me, and I will
declare the truth : forgiveness I ask not, be-
cause I deserve it not.” Sir Robert having

assured her, upon his word, of her liberty,
she, turning to me, said, “Madam, are you
not the daughter of Mr. S. D. ?” I replied,

Yes.—“Do you remember—remember !
—you can never forget the vile and profligate
sister of Mr. S.—” Here she stopped.

To whom I answered, "Art thou that base woman? You might indeed reasonably fear my resentment: but your troubled mind is affliction and punishment enough, and may heaven, as I sincerely do, forgive thee."—"Though you merit no favour from me, said Sir Robert, for your childrens' sake, who are innocent of your crimes, you shall receive a proper relief. You see, continued Sir Robert, that virtue, however severe its distresses are at first, will, at the last, meet with its reward, as in the case of this lady; and that vice, though prosperous and successful for a time, will, as you now sensibly experience, suffer in the end." * * * *

—Experience, ye FAIR, the severest master taught me the worth of virtue, which you, from my cost, may learn to prize and value. Let no specious pretence of love, nor deluding promise of marriage, prevail with you to risque your innocence. If your lover is so in sincerity, and acts upon honour, he will avoid the least indelicacy, he will use no expression that can raise even a blush, nor offer any rudeness that might occasion a suspicion of a base intention.—If he solicits any favours beyond what pure and chaste love may grant, his passion is not love, it is lust. Let him swear in the most solemn manner that he will not deceive you, believe him not: if you do, when the desire

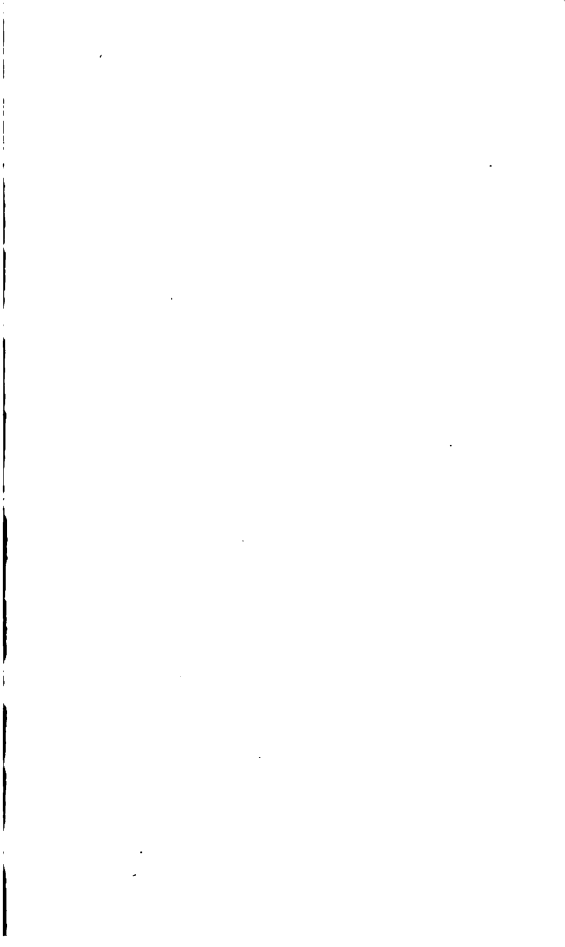
is gratified, desertion follows, and his pleasure is your misery. The credulous Calisto, had a perjured Lothario: let her fate with mine convince you, that when men swear to be honest, they purpose to act the part of villains. When they vow, with caution, hear, but never trust them; for be assured, that he who attempts to violate your honour, can have no honour of his own. The man who means well will not designedly behave ill; and he that solicits you to an unlawful compliance, by pleading the warmth of his affection, is certainly base at heart, and hath no other design than to delude and seduce you. If you yield to the solicitation, you will quickly find the fond swain to be changed into the loose libertine, and aversion and distaste succeed love and enjoyment. Wretchedness ensues. Your acquaintance, for their own sake, must shun you, if you do not, from a sense of shame and guilt avoid them, and your relations will treat you with contempt and neglect. Few such parents as mine are to be found, who would lament, commiserate, and pardon the indiscretion and folly. Thus you will spend the remainder of your days in infamy, be consumed with disease, or perish through want.

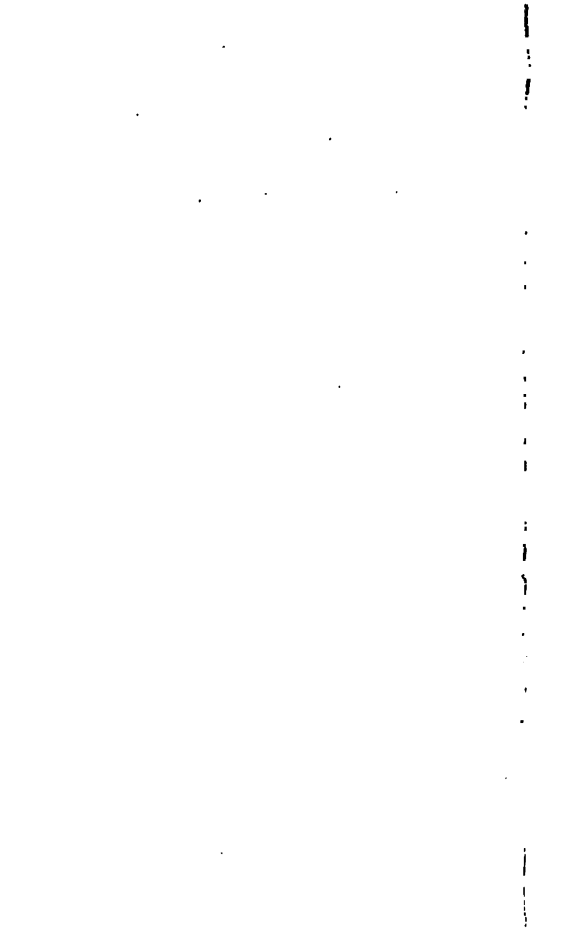
Remember, the surrender of your virtue is a crime, that no sorrow, no re-

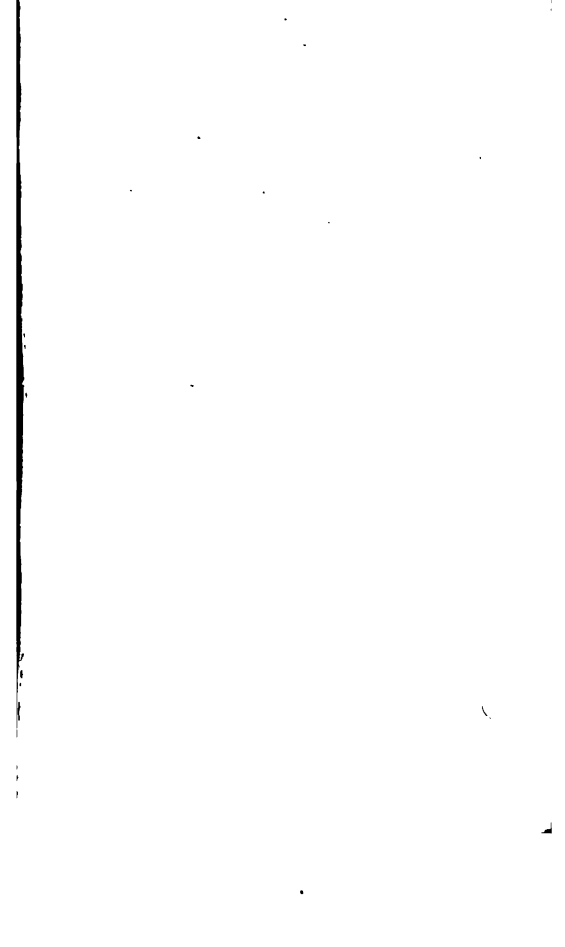
penitance can atone for and expiate, with the base perfidious betrayer of your beauty and innocence, nor with the modest and virtuous of your own sex. Meditate on these plain truths, and observe them, if you will be free from the severe reproaches of shame and guilt. Conscious worth, not sensual gratification, is happiness. Good is not from without, but from within. No enjoyment whatever will be a compensation for lost virtue. It is the mind which gives the lustre to the beauteous form, and innocence renders it valuable. Cultivate the one, and preserve the other pure and untainted, and you will be happy.

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